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THE

CHILD OF THE TIDE.



BY

MRS. EDNAH D. CHENEY,

AUTHOR OF "SALLY WILLIAMS, THE MOUNTAIN GIRL," "PATIENCE,"
"SOCIAL GAMES," ETC.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men

Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

JULIUS CÆSAR.

BOSTON 1890

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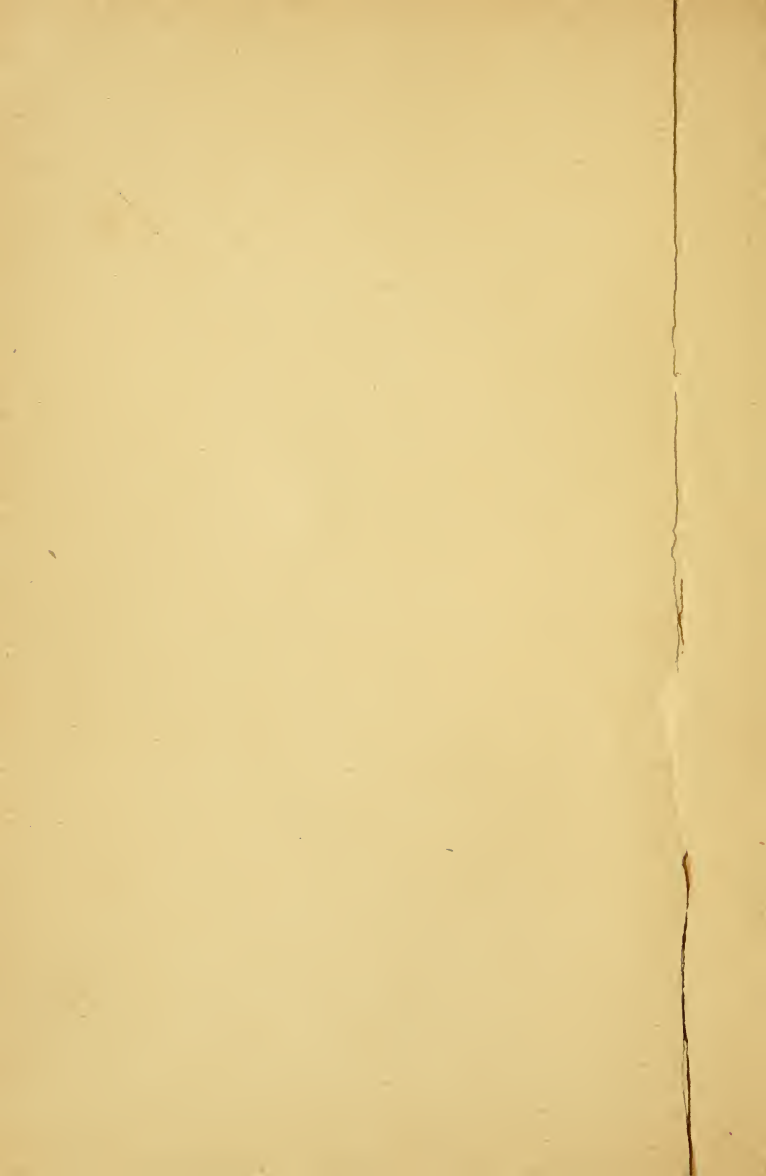
THE KIND FRIENDS

IN WHOSE HOSPITABLE HOMES I GATHERED
THE FACTS ON WHICH MY SIMPLE
STORY IS FOUNDED,

IT IS

RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY

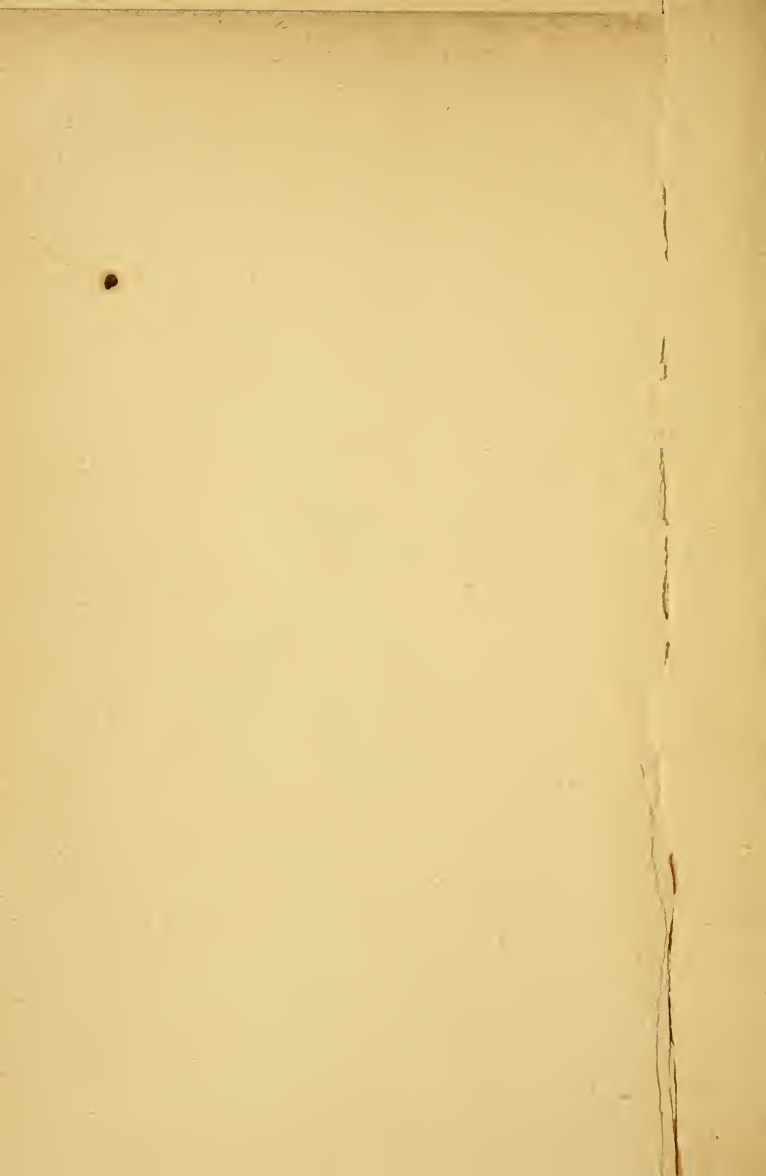
Dedicated.



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INTRODUCTION.

As I was going down to St. John, one pleasant summer day, in the steamer, my attention was attracted to a middle-aged man, the centre of a group of talkers quite near me. As I sat and heard them, — for they talked so loud, and on such public topics, that listening was no breach of courtesy, — I was struck with the manly good sense and originality of this man's thoughts, with his liberal views, his terse expressions, and the touch of imagination which lightened up all he said. I was glad when, later in the day, he gave me an opportunity to ask him a question about the shores, to which he replied very kindly, taking a seat by me, and pointing out the various islands and points on the coast.

He especially pointed out the beautiful Grand Menan; and, as I chanced to look up in his face at the moment, I saw in his eyes a tender, dreamy

light, like the expression of a past sorrow. I felt as if the man had a story, and longed to know it, but supposed that we parted forever at the wharf.

A few days after, however, when I was called down by my friends to see a visitor, I was delighted to find my companion of the boat, who was introduced as Mr. Eveleth. He invited me to come out to his place on the river, for a few days, and I gladly accepted the invitation.

It was a spacious house, on the bank of the river, with every accommodation for a family of six boys and girls, with a garden, green-house, and many other luxuries still rare in that region.

After going over the house, Mr. Eveleth took me up to the top of it, where was a broad space, safely railed in, large enough for a dozen persons to sit, and commanding a magnificent view both of the river and the bay. A closed cupboard on one side contained a little table, a few books, and other conveniences, which were thus protected from the weather.

“Shall I call this our study or our oratory?” said he. “We sit here, every hour of pleasant weather that we can take from our duties, to

enjoy this view of the river and bay which I love so much."

Here we sat many hours, for I could not resist the invitation to prolong my stay, and I gradually became familiar with all the leading points in my host's early life and character. I found him honorable, true, and warm-hearted. His naturally quick temper was now held under such steady control, that it showed itself only in passionate indignation against injustice. Thoroughly practical in all his plans, he yet had a vein of romance and enthusiasm, which saved him from ever becoming dry and hard, and his heart was as good as his head was wise. I found everybody came to seek his advice and assistance, which was freely given. He carried on a large saw-mill on the river with the best machinery, and had always the power of securing the confidence and affection of his workmen. His wife was his other self. Their union was as perfect as a chord in music, and she herself made at once such an impression of unselfishness, wisdom, and love, united with sound judgment, as won your confidence at once. Before two days had passed, I had trusted to her the one great secret sorrow and trying question of my life, and had received from her

a suggestion of the course which, since pursued, has solved the doubt, and turned the trial into a joy.

One day, as we sat in the observatory, we heard shouts of laughter, and, looking down to the avenue, we saw two young girls carrying a little old lady up the hill in an arm-chair.

“O, those madcap girls!” said Mr. Eveleth, laughing, and we ran down stairs in time to meet them as they set down their burden, themselves exhausted as much by laughter as by the weight they carried.

“Why, mother, what is the matter?” said Mr. Eveleth.

We learned that the daughters had some house-cleaning project, and wished the mother to go to her son’s for the day; but as she steadily refused, they suddenly seized her in the arm-chair, and ran up the hill with her in spite of her remonstrances. She was tenderly received, and Mr. Eveleth promised to take her home, at night, in a more proper manner.

A venerable Quaker friend was an addition to our evening circle, and I passed the week so happily in this domestic paradise, that I could not resist the temptation of throwing into the

form of a connected story some of the narrations which I had heard under such pleasant circumstances. I wish I could give my readers one half of the instruction and pleasure which came to me by the banks of the beautiful river called St. John.

THE CHILD OF THE TIDE.

CHAPTER I.

SKIMMING THE POT.

“To-whit! to-whoo!

A merry note,

While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.”

SHAKESPEARE.



N the River St. John, near its outlet into the Bay of Fundy, occurs a natural phenomenon of the most interesting character. The broad, majestic river, which has flowed peacefully down from the pine-clad regions of Maine and New Brunswick, amid varied scenery, but for the last fifty miles in a broad and smooth expanse, bordered with low, green shores, becomes suddenly hemmed in by high hills with precipitous sides, and, at last, a little above St. John, the cliffs come so close together as to leave only a narrow passage between them; while sunken

ledges of rocks, which here and there crop out above the surface, form little rocky islands. These islands are covered mainly with a growth of the beautiful broad-leaved evergreen, there called cedars, which we cultivate for hedges under the name of *arbor vitæ*.

These cliffs are of almost pure white limestone, and of great beauty in contrast with the dark green of the forest. The current of the river is very rapid, being checked midway by a huge rock; and the navigation of this noble river would be almost entirely interrupted at this point by the danger of passing these rapids, but for the counteracting influence of the tide. The tide in the Bay of Fundy rises to an unusual height, and its daily rise and fall, at the mouth of the St. John River, is from thirty to forty feet. This immense body of water, crowded into a narrow gorge, raises the whole stream to a level with the highest point of the falls, and even above it; so that at high tide, instead of the fall of water being towards the sea, it is away from it, and the passage of the river becomes nearly as dangerous from the force of the current up the stream, as it was at low tide from the eddies and rocks of the rapids. But from one to two hours before and

after high tide, when the two opposing currents nearly balance each other, the river, before so turbulent, becomes as smooth as a mill-pond ; the channel between the rocks and the shore is deep and safe, and the vessels and rafts which have come down from the upper regions, and have waited for this favorable opportunity, are seen passing down the river to their destined port, with speed and safety ; while, at the same time, other schooners, laden with supplies for the inland countries, now pass securely up the stream. This change, which of course occurs twice in about every twenty-five hours, makes the river very lively ; and, as the aspect of the rapids is constantly changing, according to the state of the tide, there is great variety and interest in the scene. Such great natural phenomena strongly influence the pursuits and character of the dwellers around them. Everything in the business habits and language of the people has some reference to the tide ; and emigrants to more tempting climes look back with longing affection to the river, which, with its constant changes, seems almost like a living friend.

On the banks of this noble stream, a short distance above the beautiful white cliffs I have

described, stood, in the early half of this century, a little hamlet of fishermen's houses. It was a straggling outpost of the town of Carlton, which was a busy little place then, numbering more houses than its rival, St. John, on the other side of the river, which has since grown to be the first commercial city of New Brunswick, and has absorbed its humbler neighbor into its own greatness. In front of one of these houses, two children were sitting on an old log, enjoying the afternoon sunshine, which is seldom oppressively hot in that climate. The elder was a sturdy boy of ten years old, the younger a girl some four years younger. He had his jack-knife in his hand, with which he was whittling out a boat, while she was tying the remains of a bright bandanna handkerchief about a corn-cob, and fondling it tenderly as her pretty doll.

The boy presently looked at the river, and called out, "Let's run down and meet pa! He'll be here soon, for he can't skim the pot any longer. I wonder if he's got anything. I don't see why he wouldn't let me go with him, — do you, Ailie?"

"Don't know," said Ailie.

"We'll go and watch the boat," said Johnny;

“and when we see it, you shall run in and tell ma to have the pancakes frying.”

The two children clambered barefoot over the rocks, like young goats, away out on the ledges, where they could look up the river, and watch the many boats which were plying about, and which now began to turn homewards, as little eddies on the surface told that the tide was running rapidly out, and that the passage of the channel would soon become dangerous.

A small, rough boat made for the hamlet, and Johnny and Ailie called out, “There’s pa!”

“Run, Ailie,” said Johnny, “and tell ma, and I’ll go down and help take the things out.”

A good, honest-looking, hard-working man, of forty years, drew the boat to the shore, and handed to Johnny a miscellaneous collection of things. There were, first, many new planks and bits of wood, then an old basket, a pea-jacket much the worse for wear and soaked with wet, an old broom not past use, a water-pail, and, last of all, what seemed to amuse Johnny very much, a fine large yellow pumpkin.

“There, Johnny,” said his father, “won’t we have pies out o’ that? If you could taste the

pumpkin pies my mother used to make at Thanksgiving!"

"I wish we could have Thanksgiving," said Johnny.

"Well, we can have thankful hearts, at any rate," said his father, a little sadly, as the pumpkin brought up reminiscences of the olden time. He was a Yankee by birth, but had drifted down to the Provinces in some wandering adventure, had fallen in love with a pretty girl there, and had never had the heart to ask her to leave home and friends, and go back to the States with him.

Last of all, he took out a fine fresh salmon.

"There, mother!" he said, as they reached the door, "you don't often get that, this time o' year; but the little fellow staid behind to give us a treat, I think; so get out the frying-pan, for I'm hungry as a pike; and see what I've got out o' the pot for you!"

This phrase, "skimming the pot," might seem more appropriate to the in-door occupation of the wife and mother than to that of the fisherman, but it is a common term on the river. By the meeting of the currents I have described, a whirlpool or eddy is formed, which sucks into

itself all the loose material which is floating on the stream, — lumber which has been washed off the rafts, or anything else which the rapid rise of the tide may have caught and swept away. Articles of some value are often thus washed from the shore, and the men and boys hover round the whirlpool in their boats, to pick up the booty. They call this “skimming the pot.” Suddenly, as one current overpowers the other, the whirlpool breaks up, and the collection is scattered all over the surface of the river. It requires some skill to manage the boat on the edge of the pot, and pick up the objects floating in it without getting capsized; and there is, therefore, a charm and excitement about this daily “skimming of the pot,” which makes it more attractive than the same operation in the kitchen.

“Well, what have you got there?” said the wife, as she appeared at the door.

“A pumpkin, fresh from Maine,” said her husband; “and I’ve promised the boy some real pumpkin pies.”

“O, you’ll never get over your Yankee notions,” said his wife, who clung rather closely to her English prejudices.

“Never mind,” said her husband; “give us

a good pumpkin pie to-morrow, and we'll have some of the neighbors in for a treat; for I'm going down the bay fishing, next day, and may be I shan't be back for two or three weeks."

"And what are ye going down the bay now for?"

"Why, Jack Willson and Tim Larkin want me to go with 'em. There's a schooner going to Boston, the first o' next month, and if we can get a nice lot o' corned and new salted fish to send in her, it'll give us a little money that'll be handy for the winter. The old house wants shingling, you know."

"I can't bear to have you gone down the bay," said his wife. "I'm always in terror all the time."

"O, nonsense, mother! Don't you think I know how to manage a boat, at my time o' life? Why, here's Johnny even wants to go out and skim the pot with me to-morrow, I dare say."

"O, can I, pa?" said Johnny.

"We'll see, — we'll see."

"I wish I could go down the bay with you, to the deep, deep sea," said the boy.

"Down the bay!" screamed the mother, who had never been ten miles from home in her life;

“indeed you shan’t! And I wish you’d give up thinking of going, father!”

“O, I’ll be back in two, three weeks, with a fine lot o’ fish; and, if I’m lucky, Mary, you shall have a new fur tippet, and, what’s more, I won’t leave you again for the winter; for I don’t much like to think of you here alone o’ nights, in this dreary place; so, come, let’s have the salmon and pancakes, and let to-morrow look out for itself.”

A few neighbors and friends came in on the morrow, to enjoy the pumpkin pies, and to wish Stephen Eveleth good luck on his voyage. The cider flowed freely, and the rum-bottle was not wanting, for they had not yet learned the lesson of temperance, and believed that their rough climate and hard work called for the daily stimulus of a dram. The song and the joke went round; and the little family, who had known only hard work and rough living, but never misery or starvation, were as merry as if they had wealth and luxury about them. It seemed as if the touch of sadness, from the near departure of the husband and father, only added zest to the enjoyment. Mary, indeed, always had a timorous dread of his venturing out on the bay; but, after all, the event was too common to

make a fuss about; and even she was by no means unfitted for a hearty supper of fish and potatoes, and other delicacies of her table, though she professed to scorn the pumpkin pie which Stephen and Johnny ate with so much relish.

“ ’Tisn’t quite equal to mother’s,” said Stephen; “ but it’s good — isn’t it, Johnny? When we go up to Boston in the schooner, some day, you shall go down to Cape Ann, and I’ll find some of the genuine article for you.”

Johnny had no prejudice against anything good to eat, to whatever nation it belonged. A hungry, hearty boy, he enjoyed the supper to the full; but when he held out his hand for a tumbler of rum and water, which his father had just mixed for himself, a strange expression came over the father’s face.

“ No, Johnny, my boy; it’s bad enough for men, but it isn’t at all the stuff for boys. If it hadn’t a-been for that, I shouldn’t ha’ been a-drifting on the world at twelve years old, and anchored down in this far off place, away from everybody.”

Mary looked a little hurt at this allusion to his old home, and a little surprised at her husband’s unwonted moralizing. There was a strange

solemnity in his manner, as, instead of drinking the grog he had mixed for himself, he set it away, saying, —

“Johnny, promise me that you won’t touch a drop of this stuff till I come back again.”

“Why, no; I’m sure I won’t,” said Johnny, who had no longing for it as yet, only caring to be manly, and to do as his father and the men did; “that won’t be long.”

“Long or short, Johnny, promise me that!”

“I will,” said the boy, awed by his father’s solemnity.

But few hours were left for sleep, when the company separated, for Stephen must be up by daybreak to take advantage of the tide; and Johnny, with one of his companions a little older than himself, were to row him down to meet his shipmates, who had a large boat well fitted for the purpose of fishing in the bay.

“Good by, mother,” said Stephen; “here’s a ribbon for your cap I got in Carlton, yesterday; and here’s a new pair of shoes for you, Johnny, and a doll for little Ailie. God bless you all!”

“Why, father, you’ve got on odd boots!” called out Mary. “That left one’s that old pair you haven’t worn for ever so long.”

Stephen stuck out his foot. "Why, so I have, Molly, I declare! Well, I can't change them now; it's a sign of good luck. Come, Johnny."

Little did Johnny dream for how many years this slight incident would remain in his memory. He was very proud of his part of the day's duty, as he helped his father on board the boat, and bade him good by. The wind was favorable, and the men hoisted a sail, which carried them rapidly out into the bay. Johnny watched them until he could no longer distinguish his father's figure in the stern of the boat, and then turned to obey his instructions to make haste and get home with the turn of the tide.


Poor little fellow! as he bent his back to the oar, and went gayly up the stream, he heard no ripple telling him how the tide had turned in his own life, and what a struggle he would have to fight his way against it.

CHAPTER II.

DOWN THE BAY.

“Thy grave! to which my thoughts shall move,
Like bees in storms unto the hive;
That from the murd’ring world’s false love
Thy death may keep my soul alive.”

VAUGHAN.

T was a glorious October morning, as the boat went down the bay, and, with a light breeze, sailed swiftly on, past the beautiful wooded shores and the green islands, out towards the deeper water, where the crew were to fish for cod and sea-shad. In spite of the beauty of the weather, and the exhilarating motion, the men were silent, and Stephen Eveleth looked very grave. His thoughts seemed to dwell on the home he had left. But when they came to the fishing ground, the spirits of all began to rise, for the fish were large and abundant, and Stephen felt as if every cod he hauled in shortened the time of his absence from home. He worked

with a will all the short autumn day, and they anchored in a little bay for the night.

Weary with toil, they slept soundly, but rose at daybreak, and put out to sea. The sun was clear and bright, but over the southern horizon lay a heavy bank of fog, which looked ominous.

"We shall have bad weather to-day," said Jack Willson, the elder of Stephen's companions. "I know that old whale's back over there."

"Do you think so?" said Stephen. "Had we not better start for home with what we've got?"

"Why, what a couple of scarecrows you are," said Tim Larkin; "it's as fine a morning as I ever saw, and I ain't going home with half a load, I'll be d—d if I will."

Tim Larkin was a young fellow from Nova Scotia, who had not been long in Carlton, and Stephen knew him but little. He had found, the day before, that Tim made frequent use of the rum-bottle, and he now perceived that his temper was not improved by his potations.

Stephen and Jack were also anxious to do a good business, and, carried away by Tim's vehemence, they put out to their fishing ground, and began their work.

So abundant were the fish, that they only

paused to snatch a hasty meal of bread and cheese, proposing to land at nightfall, and have a hearty supper of fish. But about three o'clock in the afternoon, suddenly as it seemed to them, the fog wrapped them in its close embrace, and land, and sky, and almost the water, were hidden from their sight. The tide was now running out, and they felt that the boat was drifting at its mercy. The anchor would not hold against its force, and the fog, which grew thicker and thicker, made the peril of being run over by some other vessel very great. Jack Willson, who was a steady old sailor, kept his hand on the rudder, and tried to keep the boat off the dangerous rocks which lay all about them, for by the sound of the surf he knew that they were drifting towards the Grand Menan, which, with its rough sides and outlying reefs, lay directly in their way. The sail was down, and with their oars the two men tried to steady the boat. Tim Larkin kept up his courage by frequent applications to the rum-bottle, and swore many oaths loud and deep; but Jack Willson said afterwards, that to his dying day he should never forget Stephen Eveleth's face, as he sat there wrestling with this subtle enemy whom no courage could conquer or skill

defeat. For the force of the current, the tide and the wind,—which, though too slight to clear the fog, yet was enough to increase their speed,—was such that their strength in rowing was unequal to stop their progress. Unseen enemies of rock and reef were all about them; but Stephen's soul seemed full of an inward struggle, and while he did his part at the oar with all his might, his thoughts seemed to be afar off. Suddenly a heavy thud of the boat was heard, a terrible oath from Tim Larkin, a despairing cry, "O God! my wife, my children!" from Stephen Eveleth, and the boat was dashed upon a rock, and the three men were thrown into the water. Like many men who have lived all their lives on the shore or in boats, Stephen Eveleth could never learn to swim. Some peculiarity of nervous organization seemed to prevent that feeling of confidence in the water which is necessary for a good swimmer. Tim Larkin struck out at once for the shore, which he could dimly discern through the fog.

Jack called out, "Stephen, can I help you?"

"No, no," said Stephen; "save yourself; this is the end for me. Love to my wife and babies." Jack tried to catch hold of him, but in vain, and

with the instinct of self-preservation, he swam for his own life. A hard struggle they had with the roaring surf about the reefs, but at last the two men reached the land, and stood shivering and exhausted on the shore.

“This is hard luck!” said Tim. “Where’s Eveleth?”

Jack was earnestly peering into the fog, trying if anything could be seen, but there was nothing: he listened intently, and would now and then imagine he heard a cry or a groan; but the roar of the surf mocked all his efforts, and he had to acknowledge that there was no hope for his companion, and he must think of saving his own life. They succeeded in crawling under the shelter of a great rock, where, under cover from the fog and wind, the heat of their bodies might dry their soaked garments; and here, cold, wet, hungry, and disheartened, they passed a miserable night. But again the day broke clear and beautiful over the waters, and the two men hurried down to the shore to see what prospect there was of escape.

Their shattered boat had drifted into a little cove, and, to their great relief, they found a few things still in her. Among others, a keg of ship-

bread, soaked, indeed, with salt water, but still very palatable to men who had tasted no food for so many hours of exposure to cold and wet. Many of the fish, too, still remained in the boat, which was, however, too shattered to venture out in, and they had no means of repairing her at hand. Tim busied himself with making a fire of drift-wood on the shore, partly to dry his clothes, and partly to cook some fish, while Jack walked sadly along the shore, to see if he could find any trace of his old companion.

There was a little beach of pure white sand, which now lay white and fair in the ebbing tide. A wood of cedars, with here and there a white-pine tree, came close down to the shore, its dark shadows giving welcome relief from the brilliant glare of the sun. It was a lovely spot, suggesting thoughts of summer picnics, and strolls of lovers by moonlight, and play of merry children on the sand; but here, with face upturned to the morning sun, lay the body of Stephen Eveleth.

Willson bent down and looked at him; a smile was on his face, which seemed serene and fair, as if youth had come back to him again. Strange, if in that parting moment he had any consciousness of the agony coming to those dearest to

him! Was it that even ere it left the body the soul was lifted into the clear light which saw the meaning of all things, and so left its impress on the face? Willson bent over him, and eagerly listened for a breath, a motion, a sign of life; but there was none. The sea had done its work, yet tenderly laid him to sleep in this bed of sand, when the struggle was over. His clothes were torn, and the body bruised, but the face was uninjured, and Willson felt a strong desire that his wife and children might look upon him once more. He was roused from his sad contemplation by the rough voice of Tim Larkin.

“Why, what the deuce have you got there? Come, breakfast is all ready.”

“Hush!” said Willson; “it is Eveleth’s body.”

“The deuce it is!” said Larkin, who now bent down and looked at it with some curiosity.

“Well, he’s done for, at any rate, this time.”

“How can we take him home?” said Willson.

“Take him home!” said Tim, with an oath. “You’d better ask how we shall ever get away from this ugly place ourselves? Do you mean to go to sea on a plank?”

“O, we can make some boat see us. But if he lays here in this sun, he will not be fit to be moved.”

“Now, Willson, you may as well stop that nonsense,” said Larkin. “I ain’t superstitious, but as for putting out to sea with a dead man aboard, I won’t. If you want to put him into the ground decently, I’ll help you; but I ain’t a-going to plague myself any more about him.”

“Let me think a moment,” said Willson, who, exhausted by his physical sufferings, and overpowered by the disaster, was in no state to contend with his younger and ruder companion.

As he thought over the chances of their own situation, he foresaw the possibility of its being many days before they could leave the island, as boats seldom came down so far at this season, and that they might even be obliged to get on board a schooner bound for Boston. In any case, objection would probably be made to receiving the body on board; and he was obliged to acknowledge that Tim’s counsel, though roughly spoken, was good, and that it would be wisest to bury the body securely. He then promised to himself that he would carefully mark the spot, and that at some future time, if the widow desired

it, he would assist in transporting the remains to Carlton.

“Well, Tim, I don’t know but you’re right,” he said; “let’s go back into the wood, and find some green spot where we can lay him.”

Having first eaten of their bread and fish, the two men picked out some of the stoutest staves they could find, and sharpening them with their knives, they went into the wood.

“Here,” said Jack, as he stood under an old pine-tree whose top reached above the cedars and caught the morning sun,—“here is a good spot.”

“Yes,” said Tim; “the earth is loose here; we can turn it up with our staves.”

They worked away for some time, and as the soil was light, they succeeded in digging a deep trench.

“We must go now for him,” said Jack; “the tide is coming in.” They returned to the beach. The tide, which had turned, was now fast covering up the white sands, and had almost reached the spot where the dead man lay all unmindful of its approach.

“Shall we take off his clothes?” said Tim.

“No, no,” said Jack, who shrank from rough

handling of what seemed sacred to him ; “ let him lie as he is ; but I’ll take so’thing for his poor wife.”

An old pocket-book soaked with water, a red bandanna handkerchief, and some lines and fish-hooks, were found in his pocket. These Jack took care of.

“ Let’s have his sleeve-buttons,” said Tim.

These were of silver, as was then common among all classes.

“ No,” replied Jack ; “ let them be, they’ll be a good mark, if they ever want to find him again.”

They raised him up, and, bearing him out of the tide, whose ebb and flow concerned him no more, they laid him down in the bed they had prepared, covering him with the loose earth, and pressing it down as firmly as they could. They then planted their staves at the head and foot of the grave, and over it strewed the leaves and pine needles which they had displaced. The sunbeams straggled through the old pine upon it, as if they would watch over his slumbers there.

“ It’s hard to leave him here, without a word or a bit of a prayer,” said Willson ; “ he was a good man, and a kind one. I’ve worked off and on with him, many a year.”

“Come, come,” said Tim, who seemed to feel uneasy in the presence of the dead, and to be restless for some action; “it’s time we should bestir ourselves. I can’t spend another night here, with a’most nothing to eat, and not a drop to drink.”

Tim’s rum-bottle, to which he had clung with desperation, was about exhausted, and he did not know how to get along without it. Willson felt that he had now done his duty by his comrade as well as he could, and, giving one last look at the spot, to impress it upon his mind that he might find it again, he went towards the shore, and bent his thoughts on their own salvation.

They examined their boat very carefully, but it was too much shattered; they could not put out to sea in her. They scanned the broad expanse of the bay. White sails were seen glimmering on the horizon, but not one came within hail. Again and again they measured the distance to the mainland, and considered the possibility of swimming it; but the intense cold of the water, and the danger of exhaustion, made the attempt too rash.

“There is nothing for it but to wait,” said Willson; “some boat will surely see us.”

“Easy enough to say wait,” growled Larkin; “but it means starvation.”

“O, no!” said Willson, whose courage seemed to rise as the other’s failed; “there are fish and clams enough to keep us from starving.” At evening they kindled a great fire on the shore, hoping it would attract attention, as well as give them warmth through the night; but the night wore away drearily, the morning broke, cold and gray, with every prospect of a coming storm, and even Willson’s courage began to fail; but when, as he looked out towards the point where the longed-for home lay, he rejoiced to see a vessel bearing down towards them. Tim tied his red handkerchief to a long stick, and shouted and waved with all his might. The vessel approached nearer, and they could see that she was a schooner, laden with lumber, and bound for Boston. They renewed their desperate efforts, and at last were sure they were recognized. There was a movement on board the schooner; a boat was put off, and approached the island. The two men ran down to the beach, to the very verge of the tide, and soon had the joy of hearing the hearty cheers of the men who came to rescue them.

They were taken on board and kindly cared for ; but they were obliged to go on to Boston in the schooner, as a boat could not be spared to take them home. Although a trip to Boston was a longer affair then than now, there was no help for it. Tim was a roving bachelor, and somewhat reckless in his habits, and Bill was too thankful for his rescue to find fault with any hardships. Tim accepted the first offer of a glass of grog, and sunk down to sleep on a pile of lumber ; while Bill sat musing on the friend he had left on the island, and the hard task of breaking the fatal news to his family at home.

CHAPTER III.

WIDOWED AND ORPHANED.

"To flee from sorrow, and alone to keep
The eye on happiness, leaves nothing deep
Even in our joys." DANA.



THE little family at Carlton kept on their usual course for a few days. Mary was occupied with the petty cares of her household and her children, relieved now and then by a gossip with her neighbors. She was not a woman of strong character, and had never fully comprehended her husband's more intelligent nature. He had yielded much to her, from a certain easiness of temperament, and had spent his life in a very narrow sphere from want of stimulus to higher activities.

Johnny and Ailie went to a church school in Carlton, where they might reasonably hope to learn reading, writing, and the multiplication table, but not much beyond.

As the days went by, and Stephen did not appear, a vague unrest and longing came into the heart of the boy, who had always been specially attached to his father. He seemed also to take upon himself a care and thought for his mother which he had never done before. He persuaded her to let him out daily on the river to skim the pot, and he was proud indeed when he brought home some prize of greater value than usual, to add to their scanty stores. He began to show an inventive disposition, and made a little cart, in which he and Ailie could draw home slabs from the neighboring saw-mill. But after a week or two had passed, with no tidings of the husband and father (for the voyage to Boston was an affair of some days, and neither Larkin nor Willson were scholars enough to send a letter, even when they arrived there), rumors began to circulate of his loss. It was hard to tell whence they came; they seemed to be in the air. Perhaps some fisherman had seen the wreck of the boat on the island, or wondered at not meeting it on the fishing-ground; but, at any rate, the neighbors began to look at each other when Mary appeared, and to speak to her in a constrained voice, and to pat little Ailie on the

head, and say, "Poor child!" in a pitying tone.

Johnny gathered up enough of these rumors to feel very much distressed; and he went every day to Carlton, and lingered about the wharves, looking at all the boats which lay there, and listening to the scraps of conversation which he overheard, hoping to learn of his father's fate.

It was growing cold weather now, and the poor little fellow, not too well fed, nor very warmly clad, often shivered in the autumn winds. As he stood, one day, upon the wharf, watching the boats in the distance, and the strong force of the tide that was bearing them out to sea, his head grew dizzy with the sway of the water, and for a moment he felt as if he were going to fall. Owing to the great tides, the wharves are very high, and looking down from them, even at half ebb, the plunge is fearful. A kind, strong hand was at this moment laid upon his shoulder; and, looking up, he saw the face of a middle-aged man looking kindly upon him from under the shadow of a broad-brimmed hat.

"What ails thee, my little friend?" said a pleasant voice; "thee reels as if thee had been drinking rum."

“O, no, sir!” said the boy. “I’ve never touched a drop since father went away.”

“And where is thy father gone?” said the man, smiling at the boy’s earnestness. “Is thee waiting for him?”

“O, sir!” said the boy, “he went away fishing; and he’s been gone two weeks now, and he hasn’t come back. Do you think he will ever come back?” he said, with sudden confidence. He had never breathed the doubt before.

“Come into my shop here,” said the Quaker; “for this wind is cold for thee, and it doesn’t suit my rheumatism; and I will hear about thy father, and tell thee what I think.”

Johnny gladly accepted the kind invitation, and went with his new friend. It was a small shop, just at the head of the wharf. It seemed to be what used to be called a ship chandlery, for it contained everything necessary for a vessel’s outfit, — sail-cloth and ropes, nails and carpenter’s tools, and also hard biscuit, salt junk, and many other things; but Johnny was at once struck with the care with which everything was arranged. Instead of a confused heap of barrels, ropes, and boxes, as he had seen in many places where he had been with his father, he found

everything put up in the nicest order. He sat down on a keg of nails by the stove, and told the brief story of his father's absence, and his fears that he might be drowned. He looked up eagerly into the friendly face for some encouragement.

"I fear, indeed, that some accident has happened, my poor boy," said the Quaker; "but I think thee need not give up hope; for even if his boat was upset, he may have been picked up by some vessel; so I would bid thee wait in faith, and hope for thy father's return.

"Is thee hungry?" he continued, for poor Johnny could not help smelling a savory odor from the rooms back of the shop; "but why need I ask thee? Was there ever a boy who was not hungry,—in this keen air, too?"

So saying, he opened a door, and called, "Deborah! bring me some of those savory cakes which are so tempting to the nostrils."

A matron, in narrow drab skirts and clean starched cap, appeared at the door, and brought in her hand a plate of hot gingerbread.

Johnny's mouth watered, and his eyes glistened, as he took the cakes so kindly offered; for, with the healthy appetite of a boy, in the keen air

of Carlton, his sorrows vanished at the sight of the tempting food. The good Quaker watched him a while with sincere pleasure; then he said, "Does thee know how to read?"

"I can read a little," said Johnny; "I go to school, and I mean to learn real smart."

"I will give thee two good books," said the Quaker; "and if thou study them well, thou wilt not need any more for a long time."

He took out of his desk a small New Testament, plainly but strongly bound in sheepskin, and a little pamphlet, entitled, "Poor Richard's Almanac."

"This," he said, as he gave him the pamphlet, "will teach thee how to live wisely in this world; and this" — handing him the Testament — "will guide thee on thy way to a better."

"I think I must go now," said Johnny. "Ma will fret about me."

"Fare thee well! Perchance I shall see thee some time again; but I am going to the States to-morrow, to the yearly meeting of the Friends, and I shall be gone some time."

Johnny went proudly home with his books, and they became the companions of his leisure hours and the oracles of his life; like other ora-

cles, not the less revered that they were not very fully understood — Jesus and Dr. Franklin ! He never troubled himself to reconcile the ideal piety of the one with the shrewd practical wisdom of the other ; but as he grew able to read them for himself, he turned to the one in his hours of sadness and spiritual longing, and when all his boyish ambition was aroused, the terse, crisp maxims of the other seemed to show him the way to success, and make him feel equal to all emergencies.

A week or two after this, the little family sat down to their supper of fish and potatoes. Johnny supplied them with the former, and the latter had not yet given out ; but the grocer already began to ask payment for sugar and tea, and the supplies for the winter were very scanty. The slab fire on the hearth lighted the little room, and threw a hue of brightness and cheerfulness over what would otherwise have been sorry enough. While they were eating, a knock was heard at the door, and on opening it they saw a strange man there. Mary uttered a cry of surprise and fright, and Johnny turned pale with apprehension, for he at once recognized the companion of his father's fishing trip, Tim Lar-

kin; and he was alone! Mary did not know him, and she asked him to sit down, and stood awaiting his errand. But Tim, rough as he was, shrank from the painful duty before him, and did not know how to find words to tell the story.

Johnny recovered himself first, and, coming up behind him, said, in a low voice, "Where's my father?"

Although guiltless of his death, there was something in this question which sent a thrill of troubled consciousness to the man's heart, and he shrank away from the boy as he answered, "On the Grand Manan —"

"Did you leave him there all alone?" said Johnny. "Ma, I must go to him."

"O, my God! he's dead!" screamed the poor woman. "Don't tell me he's dead, sir; I won't believe it — I can't!"

"Yes, he's dead," said Larkin, relieved to have the truth out; "a cursed fog came up, and we ran on the Grand Manan; he couldn't swim, and so he was drowned, and we buried him there as well as we could, under a big pine tree."

Poor Mary was so stunned by this blow that she sank down on her seat, without speaking for some minutes.

“Where’s Bill Willson?” said she, at length, as a gleam of hope that this might be false came to her.

“We was taken off the island by a schooner, and carried to Boston,” said Tim; “and Bill took sick with fever, and had to go to a ’ospital there. He sent you his love, and these things that we took out of his pockets.”

The old pocket-book, which still contained the small sum of money he carried with him, and the familiar bandanna handkerchief, convinced the bereaved family of the truth of the story. One or two of the neighbors, prompted by curiosity and sympathy, now came dropping in, and one of them had seen the skipper of the schooner, and corroborated Larkin’s account of Willson’s illness.

Larkin soon recovered his composure, and having an audience able to listen, he told the whole story of the wreck.

“Why didn’t you bring his body home to me?” said Johnny, with the impolitic directness of childhood.

There was something in the straightforward questioning of this child which grated terribly

upon Tim's nerves, and made him feel as if he were suspected of something.

He had only been hard-hearted and indifferent in regard to Stephen Eveleth's fate ; but in face of the tender love of the child this seemed almost a crime.

" 'Twas all I could do to get myself out o' the blamed place," he answered, roughly, " without lugging a dead man along."

The women had gathered about Mary and the children in the mean time, and were trying to comfort them.

" Poor man ! he's gone to a better world," said one ; " you wouldn't call him back again ? "

" Yes, I would, I'm sure," said Johnny. " I wish he were here this minute," who didn't see any reason in this commonplace comfort.

" O, hush, Johnny ! " said the woman ; " you mustn't talk so — it's wicked."

Poor Johnny didn't want to be wicked, but he could not understand why he should not wish for the father whom he loved, and whom they needed so much.

Glad of something to do to break the dreadful spell of the new grief, one of the women ran home for her own teapot, put it on the fire, and

prepared a cup of tea for the bereaved wife, while the others laid the table afresh for Tim Larkin, who must be hungry after his long walk.

Johnny, whose heart was ready to burst with grief and indignation, — for he had the idea that his father had been deserted on the lonely island, — could not understand this quick return to the ordinary cares of life. One neighbor brought in a cold ham, another a loaf of bread, or of cake, and still another a bottle of brandy, for choice liquor was called for by the solemn occasion ; and Tim was invited to eat and drink freely, while he still continued to answer the many questions that were poured in upon him. Mary seemed to be soothed by the officious attentions of her gossips, and sipped her tea in the midst of her weeping.

Johnny took his little sister by the hand and shrank into a corner, where, unobserved, he could wrestle with the terrible certainty which he had been fighting against for many days. As the brandy-bottle circulated, the occasion of their meeting was almost forgotten, and the men's talk grew louder, and Larkin's oaths slipped out as freely as usual, and fell with rasping violence on Johnny's sensitive ears.

One of the men at length observed the children in the corner, and felt pity for them. "Why, you poor, little things," said he, "you're left all alone there. Come, Johnny, and have a swig of my brandy and water; 'twill do your heart good."

So saying, he drew Johnny forward, and held the glass to his lips, just as Tim Larkin was helping himself liberally from the bottle, not for the first time.

"No!" said Johnny, pushing the glass away. "Pa told me not to touch it till he came back; and I won't, if I die for it, till I lay his poor drowned body up in the churchyard, and have a good minister say a prayer over it."

There was something of rebuke in the action and words of the boy which deepened the aversion which Larkin already felt for him. He tossed off his brandy with an oath, and bade them leave the little fool alone.

One by one, as the hour waxed late, the neighbors departed, and the widow and children were left alone to weep. The children clung to their mother's neck, and even the boy's courage gave way, and he sobbed, "Ma, what shall we do without pa?"

“O, I don’t know,” said the poor woman; “I never thought he’d go first, and leave me alone. But you must go to bed, dears, to-night, and to-morrow we’ll see what’s to be done.”

The girl slept with her mother, but Johnny lay down in his little attic room alone. The stars looked in upon him, as he lay there, and he heard the murmur of the tide, as it poured in over the rocks to meet the flowing river. He wondered if it was a cruel tide, and felt no pity when it flung his father’s body up on the hard, white sands. But as he listened, the tone grew solemn and sweet, and filled with sympathy; and he folded his hands in prayer, and asked that he might be strengthened to meet the hard lot which lay before him.

He was young, and he slept in spite of sorrow; but he woke to the cold, gray light of the November morning, knowing that he was fatherless, and that henceforth he must bear his own part in the burdens and duties of life.

The first question that came up to the minds of the little family was that of the removal of the sacred remains to consecrated ground, which seemed a holy duty to them. Mary had only one brother, James Seaward, a man of narrow

and coarse nature, who showed little tenderness towards her at this time. He represented to her that the season was very late for any boat to venture out so far as the Grand Manan, and that the removal could be accomplished only at great labor and expense. Mary had not energy enough to combat this reasoning, and there was no one to help her. Tim gave her a full account of the burial, and said there would be no difficulty in recognizing the spot in the spring. But prudent as the decision to wait until spring certainly was, Johnny's little heart swelled with grief. He had heard the funeral rites always spoken of with superstitious reverence, and he had an undefined feeling of wrong done to his father in leaving him alone on the desolate shore. Too young to reason, he could not feel that it made little difference to the freed soul where the worn-out body rested ; and he constantly thought of his father's spirit as hovering over his lonely grave. When the autumn winds whistled around him, it seemed an echo of their moaning among the branches of the old pine tree, and they called upon him to do a sacred duty to his father. He made a solemn vow in his heart, that as soon as he was his own master he would go

in search of these neglected remains, and bring them to the old churchyard.

Superstitious as his feeling was, it was sincere ; and there is something in a genuine consecration of the heart to a purpose, of however little value in itself, which deepens and enriches the whole nature. Any observant eye would have seen that Johnny grew more manly and thoughtful every day. But his want of sympathy with others gave him a feeling of independence and opposition, which expressed itself in a somewhat brusque and vehement assertion of his own purposes, which was hardly becoming in so young a boy, and did not always bring him into favor with those about him.


He was, however, devoted to his mother and Ailie, and now turned his thoughts to helping them through the hard winter. While he was diligent at school, he sought every little job of work he could find, and brought every penny he earned to his mother. It was very hard for Mary to find work. A little washing, a little sewing, poor and ill-paid, was all she could do ; and their stock of comforts rapidly diminished.

CHAPTER IV.

TIME AND TIDE.

“Time and tide wait for no man.” — PROVERB.

“’Tis double death to drown in ken of shore.” — SHAKESPEARE.

 IN the midst of his other anxieties it troubled Johnny that Tim Larkin was a constant visitor at their house. He would bring in some fish or game for his mother to cook for supper, to which she would add potatoes or bread. He would then produce his never-failing rum-bottle, and they would have a cosy supper together. But though this addition to their scanty meals was welcomé enough, it was dearly purchased to Johnny by this man's presence. Tim constantly urged him to drink, and was irritated at his steady refusal; and he told stories and swore oaths at which Johnny blushed, and from whose influence he longed to withdraw his little sister.

He was glad indeed when the melting snows

gave promise of spring, and he could go out on the river to fish, and get a chance as fire-boy at the saw-mills.

Early in the spring he urged upon his mother his longing to go down to the island, to seek his father's grave.

"You mustn't think of it, Johnny," said his mother; "it isn't at all safe for you, — Mr. Larkin says it isn't; and he thinks it would be of no use, — that I shouldn't know the body again."

"But I'm sure I should, mother," cried Johnny. "I should know father anywhere — I haven't forgotten him."

His mother looked very cross, at these words, and said, —

"You're a naughty boy, Johnny; how dare you tell me I've forgotten your father?" and with that she betook herself to a weak woman's refuge — a fit of weeping. "Here's my own son casting up to me that I'm forgetting his father, if I'm a bit cheerful, and don't go whining and complaining all the time, when I'm slaving myself to death for them. I should think you'd be ashamed of yourself, Johnny."

Johnny was grieved enough to see his mother cry, and to be the cause of it, but he did not understand

all her feelings, even when Tim Larkin came, that afternoon, with a smart horse and wagon, and took his mother out to drive on the pleasant Mahogany road. He tried to feel glad that she should have a little pleasure, and to be grateful to Tim Larkin for giving it to her; but it was hard for the boy to school himself to like what went against all his instincts and feelings.

So ran on the summer, until, one bright July morning, Johnny and Ailie, on their way to school, stopped on the broad, white rock which overlooked the rapids, to watch the boats coming down the stream with the slackening tide.

"I want to show you something Mr. Larkin gave me," said Ailie, taking from under her apron a gay little doll. "Isn't it pretty? He kissed me, and said I looked just like Ma; isn't he good?"

"What did you let that man kiss you for?" said Johnny, who had a chivalrous care for his little sister.

"Why shouldn't I, Johnny? He was real kind, and he likes mother ever so much. He told her, yesterday, she was the prettiest woman in Carlton."

A choking sensation came into Johnny's throat as he asked, "What did Ma say?"

"O, she just smiled and said, 'O, Mr. Larkin, you don't mean it!' But I know he did," said Ailie, "for he drew his chair close up to her, and whispered so low I couldn't hear what he said."

Johnny got up and walked about, and kicked a great stone from the cliff, which went bounding down the rocks, and splashing into the water.

"Don't you tell me another word," said Johnny. "I can't bear it, and I won't."

"Why, what is the matter?" said Ailie?

"Don't ask me! I never will bear it."

It was a long time before he could calm himself; but the school-bell rang, and his regular duties fortunately so occupied his mind, that when he went home to dinner he was able to meet his mother, without letting his indignation flow out in words.

"Jim Howard has been here for you to go out and skim the pot," said his mother.

"O, can I go?" cried Johnny, who always enjoyed this work, and who now felt a special desire for activity.

“Yes ; but be very careful,” said his mother, “for they say the tide is strong to-day.”

“I wish I could go too,” said Ailie.

“Bless your dear heart!” said the mother, “you must learn to skim the pot at home, and I hope you’ll have a fuller one to skim some day. You mustn’t think you must go everywhere Johnny does.”

“Well, Johnny must always take care of me, — mustn’t you, Johnny? Didn’t pa say so?” said the child.

“And I always will,” said Johnny, as he kissed her rosy lips.

The mother turned away with a vexed look. “Always father,” she thought.

Johnny did not perceive this feeling, but busied himself with getting out his fishing tackle, and took Ailie with him to hunt for worms for bait. He started off with Jim, about two o’clock, as the tide began to rise, and they lay to and fished a while before putting out on the broad stream.

“See there, Johnny,” said Jim, “the pot begins to boil. Now’s our time ; pull away !”

They rowed cautiously towards the eddy.

“Here’s something for Ailie,” said Johnny, as he fished a gay pink sun-bonnet out of the

stream. It was the worse for its soaking ; but, as Johnny tried it on, Jim laughed at him very heartily.

“Here’s a nice oar!” said Jim ; “and here’s a tin kettle, tight as a drum. Let’s see what’s in it!”

On opening the kettle, they found a lunch of bread, and cheese, and doughnuts, which had been put up by a fond mother for her boy on a raft, but which some accident had sent floating down the stream.

“Isn’t this jolly?” said Jim, as they appropriated the contents. There was no question of ownership about anything that went into the pot.

“Here’s a boot,” said Johnny ; “a pretty good one, too. As you’re going to be a soldier, Jim, you can keep it till you lose a leg.”

“Thank you,” said Jim. “As you’re to be a carpenter, here’s some timber for your workbench.”

Thus joking and laughing, the boys picked up everything within reach ; and Johnny forgot all his cares in the keen enjoyment of the air, the exercise, and his pleasant companion, when Jim exclaimed, “Holla ! there she goes!” and in a moment the whirlpool stopped, and the mass of

straw, and sticks, and foam that had gathered together, were scattered over the surface of the river.

“Let’s land on this island,” said Jim, “and eat our lunch, and fill our pail with strawberries for Ailie.”

“Agreed,” said Johnny, who had never been on the island. They tied their boat to a stone, and climbed the rough sides of the island. It was covered with a thick growth of cedar, and the ground was soft with club-moss, and beautiful with twining vines, and, in places, red and fragrant with the delicious wild strawberries, now in full perfection.

“We must empty our pail before we can fill it,” said Jim ; and they sat down, nothing loath, to make a meal of the bread and cheese. Johnny stuffed the doughnut that Jim handed him into his pocket, with an eye to Ailie, but did his share on the rest of the food.

“Poor fellow ! won’t he feel bad when he misses his pail,” said Jim. “It’s almost too bad to have such a good time with it.”

“He’d just as soon we’d have it as the fishes,” said Johnny.

Then scrambling over the rough rocks, and

enjoying, in their simple way, the sunshine, and the fragrance, and the wild beauty, they filled their pail with the wild strawberries.

“How good these will be!” said Johnny. “Ma’ll make us some strawberry dumplings. How pa liked ’em!”

A shade of pain passed over his face as he said this; but Jim called to him to come quick, and take the boat off.

“I’m afraid we’ve staid too long already. See how low the tide is!” said the elder boy.

They hastened to the boat, unmoored her, and pushed off as soon as possible; but the tide was already falling rapidly, and many a rock and reef was beginning to show its head above the waters.

“Steady, Johnny,” said Jim; “we shall have tough work to get through the channel.”

They rowed with all their might; but now and then they felt the keel of the boat graze upon a rock, and Johnny began to grow excited, and fearful lest they should be dashed to pieces in the rapids.

“Steady! steady!” said his older companion. “Easy now!”

They were so far on the east side of the river,

that Jim thought his best course was to pass through the channel between the white rock and the shore on that side, as they would lose time in passing round it, although it was a narrower and rougher passage. Johnny had been through it with his father, at full tide, and he did not realize the different circumstances as he approved of this course. The tide and the current swept them along at a fearful rate, and their little boat rocked heavily on the waters. They had nearly passed through the channel, and were looking out to smoother waters beyond, when a sudden thump told them their moment had come. The boat struck upon a rock, and with the violence of the shock they were thrown into the water. They were good swimmers, and they struck out bravely for the white rock, whose points, running out under the water, had wrecked their boat. Jim got a firm hold of a projecting crag, and helped Johnny up; and in a few seconds they stood upon the rock, safe enough for the present, but with no immediate prospect of return to their homes. It seemed as if the tide ran away from them like a frantic horse that had thrown his rider; for, by the time they had recovered from the shock, and looked about, their boat lay on a distant rock, but

quite above water, and the whole river was white with foam from the dancing rapids which played below them.

“Well, here we are in the middle of the river,” said Jim, “and no help for it, that I see, but to wait till the tide turns back and takes us off; but let us see if the old boat’s all knocked to pieces.”

They found it impossible to reach her, the rapids were so violent, and their bare feet were bleeding from the sharp rocks.

“We’ve got to stay here one while,” said Jim. “I wish we had some grub.”

“I’ve got Ailie’s doughnut safe in my pocket,” said Johnny.

“We’ll share that, by and by, maybe,” said Jim; “but we’ve had a good lunch, and I guess we can stand it till the tide turns. Let me see: the pot stopped boiling somewhere about four. I should say we won’t have no tide for boats to pass till about one or two in the morning. If it’s a bright night, some may come along then. The sun is just setting, and we may as well make ourselves as comfortable as we can for a few hours.”

Even in July a night on the St. John River,

without shelter or fire, hardly deserves the name of comfort; for the chill of the river fog is added to the natural coolness of the climate.

Jim, however, showed kindness and good sense. He made Johnny sit down on the highest point of the rock, on the lee side, where it was yet warm and dry from the afternoon sun, and then cuddled up close to him, to protect him by the warmth of his own body.

“Now, Johnny,” he said, “you just take a nice little nap, and that’ll do for supper; and I’ll keep a lookout for wind and tide. Nothing’ll harm us here; we’re as safe as a thief in a mill, and would be as glad to get away.”

Johnny was indeed tired, and, despite his anxious thoughts, his eyes began to grow heavy; but as he lay, in the still evening light, on this lone rock in the middle of the river, strange, solemn thoughts came into his mind, and to his only companion, though one with whom he had never before talked of much but fishing and boating, he could not help speaking of them. He opened his eyes, and said, —

“Jim!”

“Here I am,” said Jim.

"Will you take hold of my hand? It is getting so dark, I cannot see your face."

Jim took his hand, and patted him kindly on the shoulder.

"Do you think we shall die here, Jim?"

"Die! no, indeed. I'll never say die; though we're in a bad fix, that's certain. But the rock, you know, isn't often quite covered, even at high tide, and, at the worst, in smooth water I can swim ashore, and come back with a boat for you."

"No, no, Jim; you mustn't leave me. But should you like to die?"

"Why, no; I can't say I should," said Jim. "Old granny wouldn't have anybody to make her fire for her. No; I think I'd rather live, on the whole."

"I've sometimes thought I should like to die," said Johnny. "Don't you think my pa knows I'm here, and may send an angel for me, if it gets very wet on the rock?"

"No! I don't believe any such thing," said Jim. "If he wants to do us a good turn, he'll put it into the heads o' some of them folks as is expecting rafts down, to go up to-night and see about 'em, and stop here and take us off. I'd a

great deal rather see a boat than an angel," said Jim. "And you mustn't talk any more, Johnny. I want you to go to sleep, and get rested, for we may have to swim for it yet."

Johnny was a little disappointed at the reception of his confidence, and said no more; but as he lay on the rock, looking up into the heavens, where the pale stars were beginning to shine out, one by one, in the summer sky, strange thoughts of his dead father, and of the heaven to which he had gone, filled his young heart. He did not forget his mother and Ailie, and thought of their anxiety for him; and then a crowd of confused images, with Tim Larkin as a strange and unwelcome addition to the company, so filled and fatigued his brain, that his eyes closed, and, still holding fast by the hand of his kind though rude companion, he fell asleep.

The night was so still and clear that nothing gave warning of danger, and, watching his young companion for a little while, Jim too fell asleep, with his hand fast locked in Johnny's.

So the boys slumbered on the lonely rock in the middle of the river, and the great tide from the far-off ocean came swelling on and on, until it reached the mouth of the river, and poured its

huge volume up its narrow channel. Then it began to swell and roar over the rocks. And Johnny dreamed that the tide came rolling up to his very feet, and he looked up to the clear blue heavens above him, and his father's face was bent down towards him, and he longed to rise upwards and meet it. And the coming tide seemed a mighty angel, with strong outspread wings, offering to bear him up to the beautiful heavens which were opening above him ; and Johnny cried out, ' O, father, may I come ? ' But his father's face grew very tender and thoughtful, as he answered, ' Not now, my son ; this is the angel of life, who will carry you out in his strong arms to duty and to work. And wherever he carries you, the heavens will always be open above you, and your father's face looking down upon you. '

Even as the voice sounded, he felt Jim's touch upon his shoulder. " Wake up, Johnny ! the tide is rising fast, the river will soon be smooth ; now or never is our chance for a boat. "

Johnny roused himself ; but the echo of the words rang in his heart, as he shook off his slumber and looked out over the river. He never forgot them. The moon was shining brightly, and they could see every object on the river plainly.

They saw the white cliffs below them fair in the moonlight, and the high hills, crowned with green, dark against the sky. On the Carlton side the houses were all plainly seen, and on the other the huts of the Indians, which have since given the name to the place ; but though all was lovely as the morning, all was still as the grave ; no movement among the houses, no curl of smoke from the chimneys, nothing but the ripple of the tide on the rock. The boys' hearts began to sink. They saw that the tide would be full and high, and that the rock might be quite under water.

"Can you swim?" said Jim.

"A little. Not very much."

"Do you think you could swim to the shore?"

Johnny measured it with his eye, then swallowed down a great lump in his throat, as he answered, —

"No, Jim, I don't believe I could ; but you could, you know ; and then perhaps you could get a boat, and come back for me."

Jim hastily considered the feasibility of this proposal.

"No, Johnny," he said "I cannot leave you ; if we've got to be drowned, it must be together. I couldn't look in Ailie's eyes if I did it. Before

I reached the shore and got a boat the rapids would be so strong no boat could go through; 'twould be dashed to pieces."

"O, Jim! save yourself, then!" said Johnny, throwing his arms about him. "Think of your poor old grandmother!"

"Dear old granny!" said Jim, rubbing his eyes. "But I can't — no, I can't; my strength would fail if I tried such a mean thing."

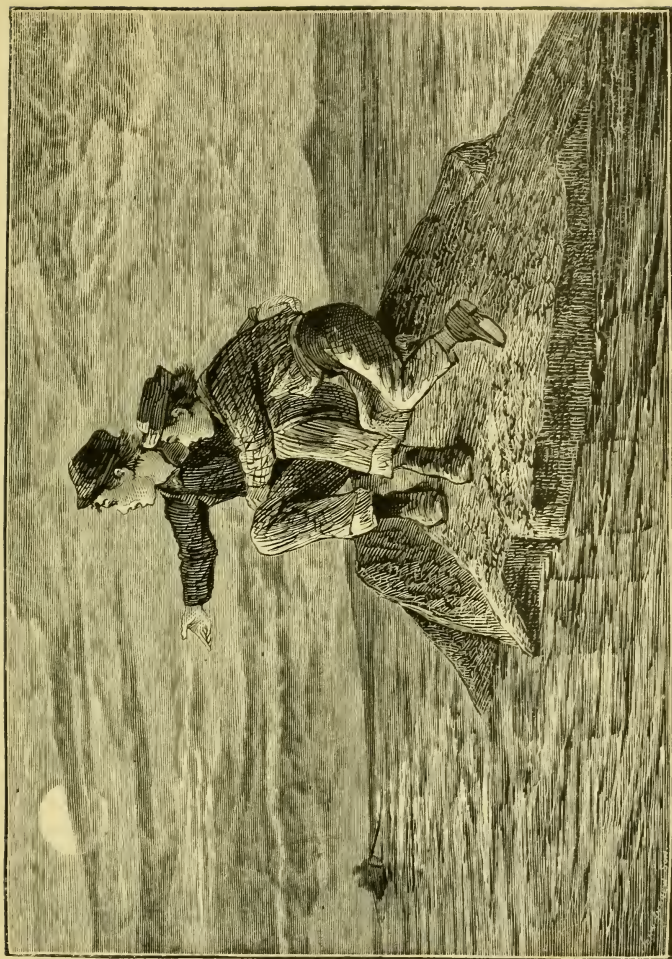
Clinging to each other, with sobs and tears, the two boys tried to brace themselves to meet the death that seemed inevitable, when suddenly Jim cried out, —

"Look there! look there, Johnny! my eyes are so dim I can hardly see. Isn't there a speck on the water?"

"'Tis a boat!" cried Johnny. "Look, Jim! shout!"

"'Tis uncle Ralph's boat!" said the boy, and, with a scream of wild joy, he leaped up and down on the rocks, and shouted with all his might. "They have missed us! they are coming for us!"

The boys had been so full of the idea that their only hope lay in catching a boat going up or down the river, that it had not occurred to



THE LONELY ROCK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RIVER. Page 68.

them that their friends would seek them, and so they had not watched the little hamlet.

The fact was, that they had not been missed until a late hour. Mary was alarmed about Johnny, and was on the cliff looking over the river when Tim Larkin appeared. He told her that he had seen the boys' boat on the island, and that he had no doubt they had been left by the tide, and remained there. There was no great risk in boys, used to all weathers, spending a night in the woods. And as Tim came in to supper, and kept up her spirits with song and story, and other interesting devices, Mary went quietly to bed, secure that Johnny would appear with the morning tide, and that she would then give him a good scolding for staying so long. But Jim's old grandmother, who had nobody to entertain her, was not so easily satisfied. Her grandson, who was very affectionate and careful, had never failed to come in before her early bedtime, to see if she wanted anything, even if he went out again for a frolic with his young companions; and so, when eight and nine o'clock passed, she grew very anxious, and watched at her door to make inquiries about him of every stray passer-by. Her son Ralph shared her anxiety, when he heard that

they were out on the river, and promised her that, when the tide turned, he would put out his boat, and see if he could find any trace of him. He was as good as his word, for the anxious grandmother watched the tide all night, and called him as soon as it began to swell the river. A neighbor joined him in the search, but as he was somewhat slow in getting ready, it seemed to the poor children on the rock as if a long time had passed since the waters became smooth before they saw the little boat on the river. The shouts of the boys, who made every noise that two pairs of boys' lungs can make, — and that is not a few, — came wafted over the river to the ears of the men; and, looking round, they saw the two boys like goats perched on the top of the rock. The men could hardly help laughing at their wild antics, as they leaped to and fro to attract attention.

“Hollo! there!” shouted the men.

“Hollo! ho!” returned the boys with a will; and they ran down the rock, and stretched out their arms to the boat. As the boat touched the rock, they sprang lightly into it, and were met with a shout of welcome from the men.

“Why, what in the world did you perch yourselves on Holwåy's rock to spend the night for?”

said uncle Ralph. "We thought you were safe enough on the island; but grandma couldn't be easy, and so we set off in search of you two good-for-nothing boys."

"Does Ma know?" said Johnny, timidly.

"Can't say; I didn't hear nothing from her. I saw Tim Larkin coming out along about nine or ten o'clock, and the lights was out soon arter. I reckon you'll have a new father one of these days, youngster," said the neighbor.

"A new father! what do you mean?" gasped Johnny, who felt as if the sea were opening to swallow him up.

"Why, anybody can see that Tim Larkin is making up to your mother; and 'tain't likely she'll be a widder more'n till her year's out. She wants somebody to take care on her afore winter comes."

"He'd be a smart chap enough if he'd let the rum-bottle alone," said uncle Ralph, "but he's too free with that to make a good husband to any woman; and I'm afraid you'll have to stand round a little when he gets on his high ropes.

Poor Johnny, faint and exhausted as he was, could hardly keep his self-control under these

words; his head was dizzy, his knees trembled, and he wished he had been left on the lonely rock to perish before he heard them. The tears began to trickle down his cheek, and the brave heart, which had held out through all the dangers of the night, gave way before this new trouble.

“Don’t take it so hard, Johnny,” whispered Jim to him. “You’d have to hear it some time; all the neighbors is talking about it; don’t make a fuss, and make things worse. You’ve little Ailie to look out for.”

Jim had touched the right chord by suggesting that there was one left to love and work for. Johnny dried his tears, and as the boat touched the shore he sprang lightly out, thanked the men for their timely aid, pressed Jim’s hand, and took his solitary way to his mother’s house, in which no light of welcome appeared. The door was unlatched; he crept into his own little room, threw himself on the bed, and cried himself to sleep.

CHAPTER V.

THE WEDDING.

“ We pray you throw to earth
This unprevailing woe ; and think of us
As of a father : for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne,
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son
Do I impart towards you.” HAMLET.



THE gossips for once were right. Mary Eveleth loved her husband while he lived, and ministered to her own life, but she was not the woman to cherish lofty devotion to an ideal love ; and having nearly fulfilled her year of mourning, and being attracted by Tim Larkin's gay, dashing qualities, she felt as if she should be decidedly happier as his wife, sharing the good luck in which he had great faith, than struggling single-handed and alone.

He had promised her — for what does a man not promise who wants to win a wife ? — that he

would be a good father to the children; and she flattered herself with the idea that the marriage would be for their good. Johnny was getting too large for her to manage, and little Ailie was delicate, and needed better comforts than she could provide. So, in October, she would become his wife.

But, with the timidity of a weak nature, she could not speak of this coming change to Johnny and Ailie; and so, through all the remaining summer days, although it was an open secret which each knew the other to be possessed of, there was no frank interchange of feeling. Johnny went on with his school and his work, trying to smother down his bitter feelings, as Tim took more and more a tone of intimacy in his mother's household, which galled his independent spirit. He was naturally of a quick, passionate nature, and it was only the strongest motives which could arm him to patience. Little Ailie, who clung very closely to him, often helped him, when thus moved, by slipping her little hand in his, and pressing it tight, as if entreating him to be patient for her sake. And he knew full well that, until he could himself give her a home, he had no right to destroy her peace in his moth-

er's house by the expression of his own bitter feelings.

The neighbors showed good will by offering their help to shingle the old house, and put it in some order for the new couple; and Mary worked till midnight in replenishing her scanty wardrobe, so that all was in readiness in due season for the wedding, which was to take place in the old parish church in Carlton.

Johnny had not been to church since his father's death. They lived at some distance from town; and Mary had been too weary with her week's work to walk a mile or more to church on Sunday. Johnny found no great attraction in the services, and his wardrobe was too shabby for him to care to display it; so that now, as he followed his mother and her bridegroom up the aisle, holding little Ailie by the hand, recollections of his father, who used to take him to church, crowded upon him, and he felt as if he ought to be chanting a funeral service over his unburied bones, instead of joining in the joyous rites of matrimony.

"Here, little dear, you shall be the first to kiss your mother and your new father," said one of the neighbors, lifting up little Ailie to her em-

brace. Mary kissed her daughter affectionately, and then drew Johnny to her. He kissed her lovingly, and, by a great effort, turned and offered his hand to Larkin.

The bridegroom took it, and stooped to kiss him.

“You’ll be a good son to your father — won’t you, my boy?” said Mary.

It was the first time he had heard the word from her lips; the pent-up passion burst forth, and he sobbed, “I cannot, mother! no, I cannot!”

A scowl darkened Tim Larkin’s face, but he answered, “Don’t worry him now, Mary; let’s go home.”

A bountiful supper had been provided, and the inevitable accompaniment of plenty of brandy and rum was not wanting. Mary’s brother filled his glass, and called upon all to drink the health of the new couple, and wish them long life and happiness.

“Come, Johnny,” said Larkin, “fill your glass, and let’s wash away all unkindness, if there’s been any betwixt us. I’m going to be a good father to you.”

“I promised *my* father never to drink a drop of liquor till he came back again, and I never

will," said Johnny, "if it's till my dying day."

There was something terrible in this reference to the possible return of the dead man, of whose fate little was known but what his successor had told. The guests set down their glasses with a shudder, and Larkin's face grew black as night, as he muttered, —

"You'll go to your father a deal sight quicker than he'll come to you, young rascal."

Mary put her handkerchief to her eyes, and Ailie threw her arms about her brother's neck, crying, —

"O, don't, Johnny! don't make him look so!"

Johnny took his sister by the hand, and led her from the table. Her place was no longer in her mother's bed, as it had been, and a little pallet had been spread for her in a small entry, out of which Johnny's room opened. He persuaded her to go to bed, and he then knelt down beside her as she said her evening prayer. She thanked him for coming up with her, and said she shouldn't be afraid if he was near her. He left her calm and peaceful; but he himself went out to the white rocks, and there, in the chill dark-

ness, he wrestled with the demons of passion within him.

His feelings were so mixed up with good and evil, that he could hardly separate them. Surely it was not wrong to revere and love his father, and cling to his last dying injunction ; and yet this seemed incompatible with obedience to this new claimant, whom he could not resist without bringing pain and confusion to the household. With natural youthful impatience he was strongly tempted to end it all by a sudden plunge into the boiling caldron of rapids below, and let the tide, now fast ebbing, bear him out to those desolate shores where his father lay ; or, at least, to turn his back upon Carlton forever, and stealing on board some of the English ships in the harbor of St. John, put all the past behind him, and begin a new life of freedom and adventure.

But the angel of love and duty came to him in the remembrance of little Ailie, whose good-night kiss was yet warm upon his lips, and whose parting words showed how much she clung to him for protection and help.

The sounds of revelry came out from the house. He lingered on the rocks, walking rapidly about to keep himself warm, until he heard the guests

departing. He stole up to his own room, without seeing his mother, took one look at little, sleeping Ailie, to compose his spirits, and lay down to sleep under the same roof with his new father.

Wearied with excitement and exercise, he gave up the thought of the future, and, listening to the murmuring of the waters beneath, he slept in spite of anger, grief, and care.

For a few weeks matters went smoothly enough in the household. Johnny kept out of his step-father's way as much as possible, and busied himself with work and play. But his refusal to drink was a constant irritation to Tim, who felt it as a reproach to himself. He came home, one night, very cross and tired, and on going to the cupboard for his rum-bottle, found it empty. Mary had gone out, and Ailie was setting the table for supper.

"Here, Ailie!" said Tim, handing her the bottle, "run down to Sandy's and get me a quart of rum. I've got a real ague fit, I believe."

"No, sir!" said Johnny, who had just entered the door. "My sister shall not go into any such place. I would sooner go myself."

"I say she shall go," said Larkin, enraged. "I should like to know who's master here. You'd drink it half up before you got home."

"You know I never drink a drop," said Johnny, indignantly.

"Not before folks," retorted Tim; "but my rum goes off pretty fast, and I've a shrewd notion how it goes."

"So have I," said Johnny, beside himself with wrath. Only the little hand clasped in his kept him within any bounds.

"I'll be rid of you, you little sneaking varmint," said Tim, out of all patience; and coming up to Johnny he seized him, and shook him so violently that he fell stunned upon the floor.

"Lie there, you drunken rascal!" roared Tim, as he strode out of the house, with the bottle in his hand; "your pretty mother'll see what sort of obedience you give me."

Mary came in to find Johnny just recovering his senses, and speechless with indignation and pain, while little Ailie was crying bitterly over him.

"O! was there ever such an unhappy woman?" said she. "O! why can't you live peaceably with your father, Johnny, and mind him, and not be making my life wretched?"

"Don't call him my father," said Johnny, "or I'll never call you mother again. And if you weren't my mother, I'd give him what he deserves, pretty quick."

"O, don't, don't, Johnny!" pleaded little Ailie.

Mary knew not how to deal with this determined spirit. Brought up in ideas of passive obedience, she had always yielded to her first husband, who used his power gently and kindly, and she had no self-reliance; nor could she understand the principle on which Johnny acted, or the strong passion of his nature.

"O, Johnny, why can't you be pleasant? If you'd only be sociable, like other folks, and drink with him once in a while, he'd be kind to you."

"Mother," said Johnny, "do you think I'd disobey my father's last word? I'd die first."

At this juncture Mary's brother came in.

"O, James!" said Mary, "what shall I do? I can't manage this boy any longer. He quarrels with Tim, and makes us all wretched. See how little Ailie is crying now!"

There was something in this form of statement not exactly according to Johnny's sense of justice; but he was too proud to make any correction.

“Why, youngster, what does all this mean?” said James Seaward; “don’t you know we are commanded to honor our father and mother, that our days may be long in the land?”

“I do *honor my father*,” said Johnny; “and I hope I shall always treat my mother with respect.”

Mary’s perceptions were not fine enough for her to be hurt by the distinction in his phrases; but she went on to tell all the little difficulties of her household, and how hard it was to keep peace between Tim and Johnny.

“Well, sister Mary,” said Seaward, “I think you had better let me take the boy for an apprentice. It’s time he was learning a trade; and if you’ll have him bound to me, I’ll teach him the carpenter’s trade pretty thoroughly, and with the Lord’s help—for James made an appearance of piety serve his purposes—we’ll break down this rebellious will of his a little.”

“O, it would be such a relief to me,” said Mary, glad to be rid of strife; for, though loving her children by natural instinct, she had neither courage nor principle enough to stand by them against her husband.

“O, don’t go, Johnny!” said Ailie. “I can’t spare you.”

“Yes,” said Johnny, “I will go, and thank you, uncle, for the chance;” for his proud heart had caught the word “relief” from his mother’s lips, and nothing would have held him in a home where his presence was a burden. He knew that his uncle was a good workman, and he felt that this apprenticeship would be a road to independence, however long and rough.

“I will not be a burden on you any longer, mother,” he said.

“There, now, I never said that!” said Mary. “How you will lay everything to me. I’m sure everybody says you ought to be put to a trade, and not be idling round here in this way.”

To a shy, sensitive nature like Johnny’s it is gall and wormwood to have the world quoted as critic of his conduct; and Johnny felt as if all the tongues in Carlton — and Carlton was all his world — were busy blaming him.

“When shall I come to you, uncle?” he said; “the sooner the better.”

“Well, the first of the week, — say Monday. I’m pretty busy hurrying up work now, afore winter sets in in earnest; and I’ll find you

so'thing to do right off. What premium'll you give me with him, sister Mary? "

"O, I never thought o' that," said Mary. "You know I haven't got a penny in the world."

"Wal, I ought to have ten pound; but, as I know you ain't got no money, I'll take a note and a mortgage on your house. 'Twon't be much use to me, to be sure, for I can't sell it over ye; but 'twill be more business-like, and make the indentures regular, and Johnny can pay it out of his portion, when he comes of age."

Johnny agreed to this; for, ignorant as he was of business, he only understood it as smoothing the way to his leaving home; and, with the sanguine hope of youth, he felt as if whatever was new must be an improvement in his lot.

Tim, though very much delighted at getting rid of Johnny, chose to be very indignant at their settling the matter without asking his advice, and managed to make poor Mary thoroughly unhappy in doing what in his secret heart he highly approved, — an art which other men and women as well as Tim Larkin understand and exercise.

Little Ailie was almost heart-broken at parting with Johnny; but he held back his own grief to comfort her, and painted glorious pictures of the

success he was to meet with in life, and how, as soon as his time was out, he would build a new house, and she should come and live with him. In comforting her he convinced himself, and felt proud and happy in the thought of beginning his manly career, while Ailie at once set about saving every scrap of bright calico she could find, to begin the patchwork quilts for their new house.

One great trial made the parting harder to Johnny. His friend, Jim Howard, who had always been so kind and true to him, had made up his mind to go out west with his brother. His old grandmother had died, he had no strong tie to bind him to Carlton, and was attracted by the promise of the rich land and genial climate of Ohio. Johnny longed to go with them, but he had no means for the outfit, or the expenses of the journey. Two other considerations held him,—his love for Ailie, and his vow to lay his father's remains in consecrated ground; so he patiently took up his burden, and was ready, when Sunday night came, to go to his uncle's, and begin a new life.

Though the distance was hardly a mile by land, nobody in Carlton ever walked when he could go in a boat; and Jim offered to row Johnny up

to his uncle's, as the tide would suit about five o'clock. By dint of much coaxing Ailie obtained permission to go with them.

It was very beautiful on the smooth waters of the now quiet stream, as Jim's powerful arms sent the boat rapidly along; and as Johnny sat in the bows, looking at the soft moonlight on the water, and the bright stars above, his brave little heart was full of trust and faith.

"I will make something yet, Jim," said he.

"I'm sure you will," said Jim. "You'll be a rich man one of these days."

"So I will; and I'll have a big white house right there on the bank," said Johnny, "where I can see way up and down the river, and hear the rapids all night long; and Ailie to be my housekeeper."

"I don't know about that," said Jim. "I think I shall come back and marry Ailie, and take her out west with me."

"Indeed, I can't spare her even to you, Jim," said her brother, drawing her close to him.

Ailie smiled a little proudly at being thus contended for by two big boys; but she timidly said, "I can't be your wife, if I can't be Johnny's sister too. I love him best, you know."

The boys laughed at the frank confession, and Jim said, —

“ Well, I’ll have to wait, Ailie, then, till Johnny gets a sweetheart.”

“ No hurry ! ” said Johnny ; “ my business is to get a living first.”


And so they floated on, picturing the future in their youthful fancies. The older boy, in his distant western life, often looked back to that still, clear evening on the river, and Johnny and Ailie never forgot the words so playfully and sweetly spoken of each other.

CHAPTER VI.

THE APPRENTICE.

“Get leave to work in this world,
’Tis the best you get at all;
For God, in cursing, gives us better gifts
Than man in benediction.”

MRS. BROWNING.

OR four years Johnny worked as an apprentice to his uncle, and a hard time he had of it. Something in Johnny's very nature seemed antagonistic to his uncle's hard, narrow character, and he treated the boy with spite and indignity on every occasion. Let us be just to both parties. Johnny was a brave, noble, generous-hearted boy, but he was high-spirited and quick-tempered, and he was not always conciliatory to those whom he did not love and reverence. He was faithful to his work, and did not use any disrespectful language to his master; but a proud curl of his lip, and a glance of his eye, often made themselves felt, and the mean-spirited master

never forgave him, but used his power, which was then almost as absolute as a slave-owner's, to degrade and irritate him. Johnny was required to take his meals after all others had been served, and of whatever refuse was left; and all the dirtiest and most menial labor was put upon him. But Johnny soon learned the wisest way to prevent this last infliction, for he devoted himself to learning his trade with such eagerness, that he became in many departments the most skilful hand in the shop, and his uncle was too greedy of gain not to see the advantage of putting him upon the best work. So, amid all his troubles, he had the solid satisfaction of feeling that he was gaining precious knowledge that would serve him through his whole life. He saw his mother and Ailie very rarely; and though Ailie did not complain to him, he never left her without a heart-ache, the little face was so pinched and sad. Two or three children were added to the family, and the mother looked thin and careworn, and Ailie was constantly busy helping her. Tim still circulated the bottle freely, told long stories, and laughed heartily; but, instead of the devoted lover, he was now the stern master, under whose eye Mary quailed, and whose every word was

law to her. As Johnny thought over these things, his blood boiled within him, and it was all he could do to keep his temper cool; but, luckily, he had a good, active trade, and many a nail was driven in with the force of anger, which would have gladly punched Tim Larkin's head instead of the senseless wood.

One day, Mr. Seaward returned from Carlton in high spirits, and announced in the shop, the next morning, that he had made a contract with a government officer to furnish lumber and men to assist in building some barracks, and one or two small bridges over streams tributary to the St. John's, near Fredericton, then the seat of government of the province. Johnny's heart leaped at this announcement, with the hope of accompanying the expedition, and seeing more of the world; but he knew his uncle well enough to be sure that any expression of desire on his part would be more likely to keep him at home, and that he had better trust to the fact of his good work than any hope of favor. Accordingly, he kept doggedly at work, planing away at his board; and when his uncle said, "I suppose you'd like to go with the men, John?" he replied,

“Just as you please, sir;” without any show of feeling.

“Well, I can spare you better than the older men,” was the gracious reply; “and you’ll do to run errands, and perhaps hold the chain for the surveyors; but mind you behave yourself, and don’t get me into any trouble.”

Johnny had to bite his lips to keep down a sharp answer; but he did so, and the moment his day’s work was over, began to look over his scanty wardrobe, and make preparations for his journey. The word surveying was very attractive to him, and he hoped to pick up some information on this and other subjects, from the officers under whom he might work. He asked and received permission to make a visit to his mother, and his uncle even allowed him a half-day holiday for it; for he knew that his mother and Ailie would spend every minute of it in brushing up and mending his clothes, and he thought it would be to his credit to have his men make a decent appearance. Johnny felt already very proud of working for the government, and discoursed to Ailie upon his loyalty to the king, and the zeal with which he would serve him, while her little fingers flew merrily over his rough woollen stock-

ings and torn clothes, which she was mending. Tim was, fortunately, absent, and he enjoyed his mother's company more than he had since her marriage. Her heart seemed to turn to him, and she stroked his head proudly, and said, —

“I do believe you'll be the making o' the family, after all, Johnny.”

He lingered with Ailie a few minutes on the rock, and watched the bright sparkles of moonlight on the rippling tide; they renewed their vows of truth and love to each other; and he rowed his little boat gayly up the stream, feeling as if he were going to launch out on the great waters of life for himself. He was the better for this hour of love and beauty through the hard, toilsome weeks that followed. He enjoyed very much the sail up the beautiful river. The wild scenery just above Carlton was familiar to him, but it was like a new world when they entered upon the broad bay above, and he saw the low, green shores spread out in their summer beauty, and the calm, placid surface of the great river.

James Seaward drove his men very hard; and the first work, which was putting up rough barracks for the troops who were to be quartered there, was of very little interest. The old governor was

an eccentric man, who disappointed Johnny's ideas of the magnificent representative of the great imperial government of Great Britain very much. He was very cross and very miserly, and dressed and lived more shabbily than the poorest lieutenant in the service. He was in great haste to have the barracks finished, as he wanted the troops stationed in Fredericton; and every day he came among the men to hurry them on with the work, or to find fault with the way in which it was done. The workmen took their noonday ration of cold salt beef, bread, and cheese with them, as they lodged at some distance from their work. During the hour allowed for their rest Johnny was one day sitting apart from the other workmen, — who were smoking, sleeping, or laughing and telling stories, — quietly munching his bread and cheese, and at the same time reading, for the hundredth time, his favorite "Poor Richard." A literary workman or 'prentice boy was a novel sight to the old governor, and he hobbled up to him, and wanted to know who he was, and what he was doing there.

Johnny politely pulled off his cap, and replied, —

"I'm one of the carpenters, sir; and I like to read while I'm eating. I get so rested."

"Let me see your book," said the old man; and he sat down on the log beside him, and took it from his hand. The first sentence his eye lighted on pleased him mightily. It was in "The way to make money plenty in every man's pocket," — "Spend a penny a day less than you earn."

"Good! good!" said the old fellow, in great delight. "Why, the man that wrote that is wiser than Solomon. Do you mind that, my young man, and you'll be a rich man some day, and count your gold by thousands."

A young engineer, who was strolling about the grounds, was attracted by the rare spectacle of the governor, usually so cross, sitting in friendly chat with a young carpenter, and he made an excuse to draw near.

He was pleased with Johnny's bright face and manner, and asked him what other books he studied.

"I haven't any books," said Johnny, "but this, and two other school-books, and a Testament."

"If you would like some," said the young

officer, "if you will come to my lodgings to-night, I think I have some that will be useful to you."

Johnny thankfully accepted the offer, and the young officer gave him an Elementary Treatise on Surveying, an advanced arithmetic, and an odd copy of one of Scott's novels, which he happened to have. The long summer evenings and Sundays gave him time to study his new treasures; and while the arithmetic and surveyor's book explained to him many things which he had heard alluded to among older workmen, the novel opened to him a new world of delight, such as he had never before experienced. He now worked harder than ever to get every part of his trade perfectly, and he took such interest in making some little convenient arrangements for the officers, that they began to take notice of him. The barracks being nearly done, a party of engineers and surveyors were ordered to go about three miles up the river, to select a site for the bridge, and make plans for its construction.

"I wish you'd let that boy of yours go with us," said the young engineer, who had noticed Johnny before. "We are rather short-handed, and want an intelligent lad to hold the chain."

Mr. Seaward hesitated for a moment, for it did

not please him either to have Johnny styled an intelligent boy, or to have him enjoy any favor; but a contract for additional lumber and work was still unsettled, and he did not like to refuse a favor to any one who might have influence in giving it.

A happy week Johnny spent with this party in the woods. The work was full of interest to him, and he listened eagerly to all the discussions on the strength of materials, and the best way of building the bridge, which went on among the surveyors and workmen. Finding him intelligent and thoughtful, his employers sometimes forgot the difference of rank, and explained their ideas to him, so that he felt as if he were for the first time really among his superiors, and yet not degraded or ashamed. That week was a long stride towards manhood, and when the work was finished, and they returned to Fredericton, it was still harder to endure the petty tyranny of his uncle than ever before.

But some adverse star had risen on his fortunes. Another contractor had offered a lower bid for lumber and labor, and the old governor summarily dismissed Seaward and his gang, paying them their due, indeed, but without gratuity or compliment.

In his wrath and jealousy at this proceeding, Seaward chose to believe that Johnny had used influence with the surveyors and governor against him; and although at one moment he derided him as a fool and a blockhead, who was good for nothing, at another he suspected him of wielding great influence even over those so superior to him in birth and education. On their return home, he took from him all skilful work, and set him to chopping wood, to carrying heavy logs across the yard, and every other laborious and dirty employment which he could find. Johnny did not know where to find patience to endure this treatment. It was only the remembrance of the premium his mother had paid, and the mortgage his uncle held on her house, that restrained him from breaking out into open rebellion.

It was evident that the universal habit of moderate drinking, in which his uncle had always indulged, was increasing to excess, and in his present mood he was not likely to forego the comfort of the bottle. Tim Larkin visited him now more frequently than usual. After one of these visits Seaward ordered Johnny to take up a heavy log and carry it across the yard. The

ground was soft and muddy from recent rains, and the log was wet, dirty, and slippery. It was a task quite beyond Johnny's strength.

"I cannot do it, sir," said Johnny, respectfully ; "the log is too heavy at any time, and now I cannot keep my footing."

"Don't tell me you can't do what I bid you," thundered his master ; "you shall do it at once. Take up the log."

Johnny attempted to do so ; but, as he lifted it, it rolled from his hands into a puddle, and splashed them both with the cold, dirty water.

"You mean son of a Yankee runaway," said Seaward, in uncontrolled passion, "I'll teach you to insult me ;" and he gave the boy such a blow on his head that he fell reeling over the log into the mud.

Somewhat frightened at what he had done, — especially as he saw that two workmen were witnesses of the transaction, — Seaward walked into the house without another word.

The workmen helped Johnny to rise, and to shake the mud from his face and clothes ; but he did not speak a word in answer to their inquiries, except to thank them, and then he walked slowly towards the river. He sat down, and

looked upon it long before his stunned brain acquired the power of thought ; but at last, while his heart burned with wrath at the insult to his father, at the cruelty to himself, there welled up through all a glad, triumphant feeling of emancipation. His uncle had himself burst the bond that bound them. Neither God nor man would require of him to stay and suffer longer. He washed his face in the river, knelt down on the rock, and in his own fashion poured out his heart in words of strong supplication and resolution, and took his way to the house, determined that he would not sleep another night under its roof.

Although Johnny had not many worldly goods to dispose of, yet it was quite late before he had made his preparations for departure ; and then he sat and listened, to be sure that all in the house were asleep. Not a mouse stirring ! so he climbed out of the one-story window on to an old shed beneath, and sprang lightly to the ground, with his little bundle in his hand, of which his few precious books formed the largest part. He did not stop long to mourn over the friends he was leaving, or to admire the beauty of the calm sum-

mer night, but took his way at once to the road which ran near the bank of the river.

As he paced slowly along, — for the reaction from the excitement which sustained him at first had begun, and his limbs felt weary and his heart faint, — he heard a loud shout or halloo from the river. At first he thought it was only the scream of the owl or the night-hawk ; and yet it broke pleasantly on the solemn silence of the moonlight night. But on looking towards the river, he perceived the well-known eddy of the current, and saw a boat, with a man or boy in it, engaged in the process we have already described of skimming the pot. The shout seemed meant for a call, and Johnny went towards the bank, and responded to it lustily. The boat approached the shore, and in the clear moonlight he could see the rough black head of a half Indian, half negro boy, who roamed about the neighborhood, often disappearing for a long time, and then coming back to sell baskets, or do such work as he could find for a few days. From his fondness for the water, and his facility in managing any craft, from a strip of bark upwards, which he could lay his hand on, he had acquired the nickname of “ Billy Paddle.”

“Is that you, Billy?” said Johnny, as he approached within hail.

“Yah,” said the boy, with a strange guttural accent difficult to imitate by any phonetic system.

“What are you doing there? and whose boat is that?” continued Johnny.

“I’m skimming the pot, and it’s my boat,” said Billy, rather sulkily. Maister Forbes gave it to me, ’cos ’twas so leaky he couldn’t fix it. Haw! haw! haw!” and the boy laughed loudly, with the sense of superior skill in managing his leaky craft.

“Will you take me down the river to mother’s house?” said Johnny, who knew nothing pleased Billy so well as trust in his seamanship; “if you will, I’ll help you skim the pot. See! it’s boiling splendidly now!”

Billy answered by urging his crazy craft alongside a projecting rock, which afforded a good place for embarkation, and Johnny sprang in lightly. The boat was indeed leaky and dirty; but Johnny could not help admiring the skill with which Billy guided her towards the wind and the current, so as to strain her as little as possible, and he did not doubt that she would stand this one voyage down the stream, which would soon

be calm and still. So they pushed off for the boiling pot, and were soon busy in picking up all the refuse which they could find. Johnny carefully preserved many nice bits of wood, while Billy seized upon everything in the way of clothing, as, indeed, he depended for his outfit mainly on the skimmings of the pot, and so wore motley garments of every shape, size, and color.

Presently Johnny seized upon a prize with which he was greatly delighted, and which Billy willingly relinquished to him. It was a carpenter's rule, which, left on a pile of lumber, had been washed off by the tide. One of Johnny's great troubles, in looking forward to any independent work, was his utter want of tools. He knew that he must be only a subordinate hand until he could have his box of good implements ready for any emergencies. So he hailed this gift, which his old friend the tide had thrown up to him, as an omen of future success, and opened and shut it, and looked on the numbers with great reverence.

Billy did not sympathize with him.

"I'd rather have this old jacket," said he, lifting up a red flannel shirt, which he had picked up, dripping, from the water.

"I'm well content with my luck," said Johnny; "and there she goes!" as suddenly the eddy broke, and the miscellaneous stuff was spread over the water.

"Now's our time," said Billy, and he headed his crazy craft down stream, and they rowed swiftly over the smooth surface of the water.

Johnny thought, as he sat in the still, beautiful night, of his joy at finding this simple carpenter's rule. And it made him think how his own life was now to be ruled and measured by himself, and that he must no longer drift with the changing tide, but take the control of it steadily into his own hands.

"Awl tak yer back to yer uncle's to-morrow," said Billy, in his awkward dialect; "yere a real gude hand at the oar."

"Thank you, Billy," said Johnny; "but I'm not going back to my uncle's."

"Whar are yer going?"

"I hardly know myself. I'm going first to see my mother and sister, and then I must find some work to do. But I'll tell you what, Billy: to-morrow I'll mend up your boat for you, if you'll get me some nails and a hammer."

"A wull," was the glad answer; for to own a

decent boat was the height of Billy's ambition. But, although so clever in the management of one, he had no skill in carpentry.

"I picked up these pieces of wood on purpose. Now, if you'll be at the cove by the saw-mill, to-morrow at nine o'clock, with the hammer and nails, I'll meet you there and mend up the boat. Here's the place to land me now."

Billy put him on shore, and renewed his promise to meet him the next day.

It was now nearly daybreak, but no one was yet stirring in the old house. Johnny sat down for a few minutes to think over his future. He had little hope that his mother could help him either with advice or assistance ; but both love and duty bade him consult her before taking any new course of life. Besides the need of immediately earning his living, and laying up a provision for himself and Ailie in the future, — for he foresaw that the day would come when he would be her only protector, — was the earnest religious desire he felt to visit the grave of his father, and if possible to remove his remains to consecrated ground. He had always promised himself that his first hour of freedom should be consecrated to this purpose ; and Billy Paddle and his boat seemed to him the

instruments designed by Providence to enable him to accomplish this end. It is very easy for a determined will and a quick brain to find providential helps to any good purpose.

As the day now began to dawn, he stole under Ailie's window, hoping to waken her, and have a little chat before his mother and Tim came down. He whistled his favorite "God save the King," as loudly as he could, and presently the dear little face appeared at the window, with eyes scarcely opened, and looked amazed and wonder-struck at the sight of her brother.

"Come down quickly, Ailie. I must see you," said Johnny.

She hurried on her clothes, and was soon with him, eagerly asking the reason of his sudden appearance.

"I have run away from uncle James," said he; "he abused me and knocked me down, and I couldn't stand it any longer; and now, Ailie, I'm going to be a free man, and make my own way in the world, and I'll come back and build a house for you and me to live together, as I promised you I would."

"O, Johnny!" burst out the poor child, "I

can't let you go away. I haven't any comfort but you."

Johnny saw that she was indeed thin and miserable, and he felt that he must in some way release her from her present life.

"Don't be afraid, darling," he said, as he held her in his arms, and kissed her poor, pale cheek. "I'll never forget nor desert you: I'm so strong and brave." But even as he said it he was nearly fainting with fatigue and hunger.

For half an hour they exchanged their stories of present suffering and future hope, and then Johnny heard a sound in the house, and knew that his mother was getting up; so he sent Ailie in to tell her of his visit, for he did not want to encounter Tim if he could help it.

"O, my poor boy!" she said, "why have you left your uncle's? I thought you were provided for."

"Mother, he has abused me all the way through; and yesterday he called my dear dead father names, and he knocked me down in the dirt; and I can't, and I won't stand it."

"O, my poor boy!" said she, wringing her helpless hands, "I can't do a thing for you. He's as cross to me as he was to you; and he's lying

there now, dead with sleep and drink, and he'd kill you if he knew you were here — I know he would."

"Well, mother, I won't trouble you nor him," said the proud Johnny. "I can sleep under God's free roof until I can pay my own shelter." So saying, he turned away.

"O, Johnny! Johnny! don't think hard of me," said the poor woman. "I can't help it — indeed I can't."

Johnny turned and put his arms about his mother.

"You're my own dear mother," he said, "and I'll never forget you; but I can't forgive that man for abusing you and Ailie; so don't ask me to."

"But you must have some breakfast, Johnny. I'll bring it out to you here."


Johnny was about to refuse, but he felt it would be unkind to his mother; and she brought him out some cold meat and bread, which, indeed, he needed badly enough.

He ate quickly, bade his mother good by, and then asked Ailie to walk a little way with him. She put on her sun-bonnet, and went with him to their favorite rock by the river. The poor boy was so exhausted that she begged him to lie down

in a sheltered spot, with his head in her lap, and rest. He was glad indeed to do so, and in that unwonted presence of tenderness and love, with the sun rising warmer and warmer upon him, he lay and slept as sweetly as if he were no destitute orphan, but the favored heir of a luxurious home. The little sister watched him with womanly care and joy; and she seemed older from that hour, and more fitted to take upon herself the great duties and labors of life.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FISHING.

OR two or three hours Ailie sat patiently watching her brother's heavy sleep, happy in the consciousness of his presence, yet looking forward to a future of separation, now colored brightly by sanguine hopes of a happy reunion, and now darkened by a sense of the sufferings which would surely come, and the dark possibilities which might be dreaded. The sun was high, and bright, and warm, when Johnny at last roused himself, shook off the heavy slumber, and looked up wonderingly at little Ailie, before he could fully recall why and how he was there. But he was soon on his feet, wide awake, and alert for any new work.

“Why, Ailie!” he said, “have I been keeping you here so long? I’ve had such a splendid sleep; and now I must be going about my business. See, the tide has turned already, and I have a job of work to do before noon.”

“And where will you get your dinner?” said Ailie.

“Out of the river, as I have many a day before. I can broil an eel, if better meat’s not to be had. But you must run home now, Ailie dear, or there’ll be a storm brewing over our heads; and I’ll meet you here every Sunday morning at sunrise, unless I’m miles and miles away. Will you agree to that?”

“Indeed I will,” said Ailie; “but shan’t I see you all through the week?”

“Perhaps not. I’d better keep out of uncle’s way, though I’m not much afraid of him, for there were too many witnesses of how he treated me for him to make much stir about it; but it’s no use my being round to worry mother till I can do her and you some real good.”

“O, you always do me real good,” said little Ailie.

“So do you me, dear little sister,” said Johnny, as he rose to his feet; “but I must leave you now; so good by.”

He gave her a fond kiss, and she went her way back, while he started cheerily on his walk towards the saw-mill, to meet Billy Paddle. Billy was there waiting for him, for though he carried no

gold watch, he watched the run of the tide every day, and could tell the time well enough when he chose to.

“I’ve got a hammer and nails,” he called out; “and here’s the old boat. Heigho!” he cried out, with a shrill whistle, as Johnny approached.

“Where did you get the nails?” said Johnny.

“I borrowed the hammer of the minister’s boy, and I picked the nails out o’ the boards by the old house that’s tumbled down,” said Billy.

The nails were of all sizes, and shapes, and ages; but Johnny set his companion to sorting them out, while he picked out pieces of wood suitable to his purpose, and began to patch and calk the old boat. After many hours’ labor, she seemed to him firm and tight enough to start on the voyage he meditated.

“Now, Billy, how do you like her?” said he.

“She’s fine! she’s fine!” said poor Billy. “If we only had some red paint to put a gay gown on her.”

“Never mind that,” said Johnny, “if she’s only tight and strong. Now, Billy, how would you like to go fishing with me in this boat?”

“For eels?” said Billy.

“Why, yes, perhaps for our first dinner ; for I confess I’m getting hungry.”

“I’ve got some grub,” said Billy ; and from some hiding-place he pulled out an old basket full of odds and ends of food, which had been given him at various places.

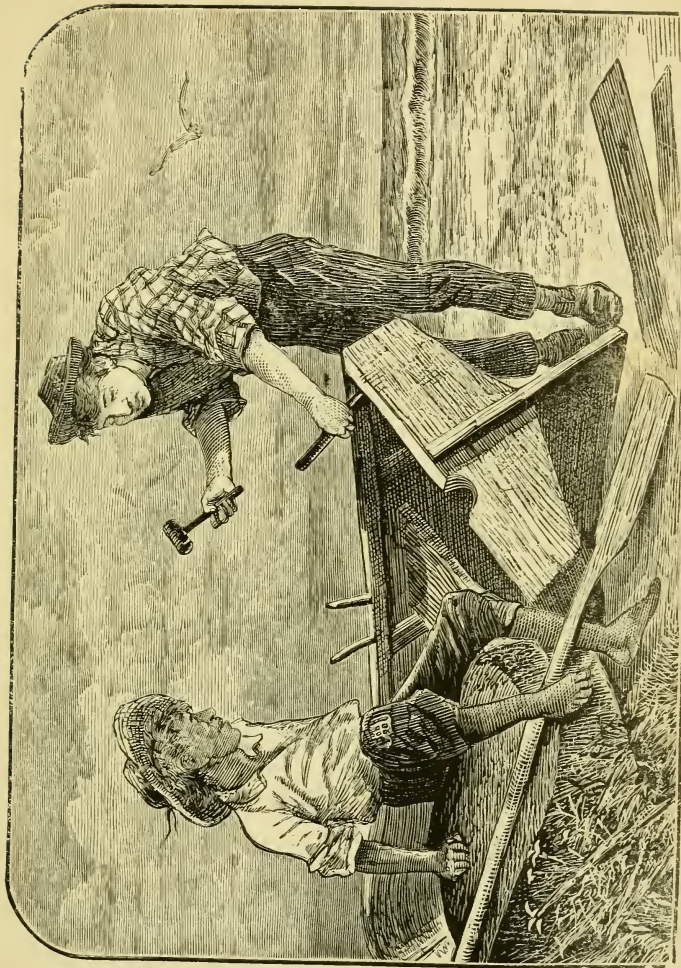
It was not a very tempting mess, but Johnny was hungry, and did not want to lose time in seeking better food. So he sat down on a log with Billy, and munched away at the cold bannocks and potatoes, while they talked over their plans.

“Have you got any fishing-tackle, Billy ?” said Johnny.

“See here !” said Billy ; and he pulled out some jagged strings and rusty hooks, which he had skimmed out of the pot, or picked up in his wanderings.

“O, that won’t do at all, Billy. We must go a-fishing for real salmon out in the bay ; and I want to start to-morrow morning, for it’s getting late in the season, and I’ve something else to do after this. Will you have the boat all ready, and I’ll try to get some tackle ?”

Johnny hardly liked to bring his pride to telling Billy to beg for food to take with them, and



yet he had not a penny to buy any with. But he did bring himself to say, —

“You can bring the basket along with you, Billy.”

“Eugh,” grinned the boy, as if he understood the commission; and Johnny felt sure they would not starve, and they could cook some fish when they had caught them. Johnny now washed his face and hands, smoothed his hair, and brushed his clothes, and prepared for a walk into Carleton, to see what he could do in the way of getting fishing-tackle. He had been so much out of the town that he had few or no acquaintances there. His father of course had no relations, and his embroilment with his uncle prevented his seeking any of his mother’s friends. His old friend Jim was at the west, and he did not want to ask aid from strangers; but as he was sauntering slowly along the street, he was surprised at hearing a soft, pleasant voice, which addressed him.

“How d’ye do, Johnny? Don’t you see the new moon over your right shoulder? Why don’t you jingle your money in your pocket?”

“Because I haven’t a penny there to bless myself with,” laughed Johnny in return; “but maybe it’ll bring me good luck all the same.”

"I'll wish it to you, at any rate," said Rose Maynard, a bright young girl three or four years older than Ailie, whom Johnny remembered as his neighbor at the little school where they had been for a year or two.

"Come in and have supper with us," said the girl. "I smell the pancakes."

Had Johnny not needed a supper, he would have accepted this invitation as freely as 'twas given; but having just confessed his poverty, he suspected her of offering it as a charity; and so, though he too smelled the pancakes, at least in imagination, and hadn't tasted one for many a long day, he resolutely declined, saying he had an errand to do, and must go down to the wharves.

"How's little Ailie?" said the girl, with that affectation of motherly superiority which a year or two more of age, when age is still an honor, is apt to confer on a girl. "I wish she'd come and see me. Mother's so sick, I can't go out hardly any."

"I'll tell her you asked her," said Johnny; "she doesn't forget you, you were so kind to her in school. Good by, now," he continued; and he went on, with a certain warm glow in his heart, as if his good angel had met him on his way.

But how to get his fishing-tackle was now his first consideration. The only thing he could sell was his books or his rule, and he didn't want to spare them. As he sauntered along the wharves, hoping for a chance to do a job of work or a good turn for somebody, which would entitle him to ask for aid, his eye was caught by a bright new sign over a shop door, and he saw that the shop was neat and well painted, the sidewalk whole, and the windows clean; a thing he had not remarked anywhere else in that part of the town. He read over the name, "Ephraim Jenkins," and old memories arose in his mind.

"It's my old Quaker; I'll try him," he said to himself.

He went into the shop, and looked around. There, indeed, was the old Friend, in his drab coat and clean linen, with his hair a little grayer than before, but with the same pleasant face and voice, as he addressed his customers with the pleasant "thee" and "thou" of his sect.

"And what does thee want, my lad?" he said to Johnny, who waited for the chance of being alone with him before preferring his request.

"Sir!" said Johnny, boldly, "I want to go

a-fishing to get my living, and I haven't any tackle; and will you let me have some line and hooks? I have no money now, but I'll pay you when I can, sir. I will, sir," he said very simply and emphatically, as he thought he saw a lurking doubt in the trader's eye.

"And why does thee think I will trust thee with my goods, boy?" he said.

"Because, sir, you were very good to me once before when I was in trouble, when my father was lost. Don't you remember it, sir?"

The look which always came into Johnny's eyes when he spoke of his father — for all the religion and poetry of his soul went into that feeling — could not be mistaken by anybody who had any knowledge of the inner light, and the old Quaker's heart grew tender towards him; but he was a cautious man, and he said, —

"I do not remember thee; but thee has doubtless changed much."

"But these books have not changed, sir," said Johnny, and he drew out of his pocket the well-thumbed Testament and Poor Richard which the good Friend had given him so many years before.

"Let me see! let me see! Thee is right. I do remember thee. And has thee studied these

books? and does thee walk by them? Then surely I will trust thee;" and the kind old man — wiping his spectacles, which got strangely clouded when his heart was touched — began to take down his best assortment of lines and hooks, and display them before Johnny with as much zeal as if he were a rich and frequent customer. Johnny began to select what he wanted.

"Now take a good, strong line," said the Quaker; "thee'll never find a poor thing is cheap. And take one more than thee needs; for it's a good thing to have two strings to thy bow."

Johnny already was as sure of victory as the knight Ivanhoe when he got his coat of mail and good sword again, and felt himself already rich in the booty he was to snatch from the deep.

"Thee must come in and take thy supper with me too, to-night, for I am all alone; and thee shall tell me how thee likes Poor Richard, and what thou art going to do in the world."

A plain Indian bannock and a strip of salt cod-fish — for the Friend was Massachusetts born, and kept up his old customs — was the plain, homely meal set before him; but Johnny never forgot the enjoyment of that hour. The sense of confidence in himself, begotten by the old man's trust in

him, seemed to do away with all the degradation which his uncle's petty tyranny had caused him, and he listened eagerly to every word of shrewd wisdom which fell from the lips of his kind and experienced friend.

“Don't thee believe people who tell thee there is no making money honestly in the world; the world would go to pieces to-morrow if that were so. It's good, honest, fair work, that everybody wants, and that gets well paid for in the end. Nobody wants a rotten fish-line when he's got a twenty pound salmon at the end of it. If thee does anything so well that nobody can do it any better, thee can be sure to get thy price for it; but slipshod work's always a drug in the market. Just take out o' thy Testament the rule, ‘To do to others as thou wouldst have them do to thee,’ and learn from Poor Richard, that

‘He that would thrive
Must hold the plough or drive,’

and, ‘To spend a penny a day less than thou earnest,’ and thee'll be a rich man some day, and a good one too.”

Johnny bade him a cheerful good night, mentally resolving that the finest young salmon he caught

should give the old man his Sunday dinner, and went out to find Billy, and to sleep with him on the rocks, under the shelter of the old boat.

Long before dawn they were stirring, had dug some clams with which to catch small fish, which would bait for the larger ones, and were ready to take advantage of the smooth tide to go through the rapids and out into the open bay beyond.

Billy was full of triumph in managing his little craft, and when they lay to to fish, he was in great excitement. It was long before they were successful in their search; a few tomcod or haddock were all they had secured before noon, and Billy's courage began to fail. Indeed, perseverance was not one of his characteristic traits, and this was the source of his vagrant and unprofitable life.

"Let's go back," said he; "there's no good staying here."

But Johnny refused to go while a glimpse of daylight remained, and presently he was rewarded; his line twitched strongly, and as he drew it carefully up, he saw the beautiful shining scales and orange color of the desired fish.

“Quick, Billy! help me! See here what I’ve got!” he said.

They pulled steadily and strongly, and drew in a large, beautiful salmon, which restored all Billy’s spirits.

“Keep her steady! there’s a school of them, I do believe,” said Johnny; and while Billy kept the boat from drifting away by his skilful sculling, Johnny drew in one beautiful prize after another, until a dozen lay in the bottom of the boat.

“Now let’s make for home,” said Johnny, “and see what old Johnson’ll give us for them. And we’ll have one supper of bread and cheese out of the money, anyhow, that nobody’s had the eating of first, Billy.”

It was a good day’s work for the boys, the best that Billy had ever made; and Johnny had never before found himself the possessor of twelve shillings all his own. He did not forget his creditor, but as soon as they were paid they went straight to Ephraim Jenkins, and, with no little pride, Johnny asked for his account, and discharged it on the spot. He then produced a fine little salmon, which he begged the good

Quaker to accept from him in gratitude for his kindness."

"Thee has had good luck to-day," said the old man; "but don't thee trust to luck always; turn to something that thy own strength and skill can make thee sure of."

For a week or more the two boys pursued their fishing daily, with variable success, sometimes spending many hours in vain, and sometimes getting a good rich haul; but it was now growing late in the season, and Johnny felt that he must be thinking of other matters. Every Sunday morning he had spent an hour or two with Ailie, on the rock by the river, and the more he learned of her life at home, the more deeply he felt for her cheerless lot, and was dissatisfied that she should be exposed to the coarse brutality of her step-father, and have no opportunity for education or improvement. A part of these precious hours he spent in reading to her, while she sewed up the rents in his clothes. But he determined that he would not leave her in this situation. One evening, as he was returning from selling his fish, which he had just brought in, he was attracted by an old sailor, who was sitting upon the wharf, and telling long

yarns to a knot of men gathered around him. Johnny, of course, liked a story as well as other boys, and he drew near to listen to an account of a great storm on the coast of Nova Scotia, where the sailor had narrowly escaped with his life.

“I don’t know why it is,” said he. “I’ve followed the sea all my life, and I love it; and I’m willing enough to live on it, and there ain’t many to care for this old hulk; but somehow I want to lay my old bones down on the land, and have the grass grow on ’em, and the birds come a-singing over ’em, and even the children, perhaps, picking the cow-bells off ’em. I never left a shipmate unburied if I could find enough of him to put in the ground — ”

There was something in this speech which touched a chord in Johnny’s heart, and on looking more closely at the old sailor, he was sure he had seen him before. He watched him carefully, until he was convinced that he had been the companion of his father’s last voyage, and that it was he alone — for he would have searched the world over rather than name the subject to his step-father — who could give him more exact knowledge of his father’s grave. He waited till the

crowd dispersed to go home to their suppers, and then accosted the old man.

“Excuse me, sir; but aren’t you Bill Willson?”

“Why, yes, boy; that’s my name, and I ain’t no cause to be ashamed on’t. But I can’t say I know yours.”

“I’m John Eveleth, and I’m the son of Stephen Eveleth.”

“What! are you the little fellow that wanted so to go off in the boat with us? Why, you’ve grown a stout, likely lad. Lucky for you you staid at home, for we had a hard time, and poor Eveleth never come back to tell of it.”

“Will you tell me all about it, sir? I know you did all you could for him, but I want to know where he’s buried, and to go and see the spot, and some time bring his body to lie in the old churchyard, where I’ll lie some day, sir.”

The old man stared at the boy, for he did not often touch human nature on its sentimental side; but he seemed to understand him too, after a minute.

“Well, I don’t know but it’s natural enough; and, let me see! I should like to see the old Grand Manan myself; and the old schooner’s hauled up for a while, and I’m just loafing about; so I’ll go

with you, and we'll take a look at the spot, and p'raps when you see God's sun a shining down upon him through the old pine trees, as beautiful as 'twas that day, you'll be content to let him rest there, and feel as if he was just as much in heaven as if you'd put up a big monument over him."

"O, will you go?" said Johnny. "Will you come now, and see Billy's boat, and if you and he'll go in her with me?"

Billy's highest ideal of humanity was a sailor who went to sea in a big ship, and he was both delighted and honored that he and his boat should be noticed by one. The old man examined her carefully, and agreed that she might stand the voyage if better craft could not be had.

"Will you go and take us down to the island?" said Johnny to Billy. "I will pay you for it."

Billy said nothing, but grunted out a strange guttural, which Johnny took for acquiescence, and the old man left them, promising to be ready for the voyage on the next day. But Billy continued so silent and uncompanionable, that Johnny at last perceived it, and urgently begged to know what was the matter.

“I thought we were partners and brothers,” said poor Billy, with great sobs, “and now you want to pay me and make a servant of me, like all the others.”

“No, I don’t,” said Johnny; “but why should you go and help me for two or three days without pay?”

“You don’t give Ailie money when she sews up your clothes,” said Billy.

“Yes, but —” Johnny was stopped. The reason that rose to his lips, that Ailie was his little sister, and they never thought of anything but helping each other, would only have marked the very difference that Billy felt so keenly. He found that people, who saw how bright and active Billy was, had often tried to engage him as a servant; but he could not bear restraint or superiority of any kind, and would serve only for love or his temporary convenience.

“I’ll go wi’ ye down the bay, and I’ll help ye find your father’s grave, if ye’ll do one thing for me.”

“What’s that, Billy? I’m sure I shall want to.”

“Will you come and see my grave when I die?”

“Certainly I will,” said Johnny. “But, O

dear! two young, strong boys like us ought not to be sitting here talking o' dying. Is it agreed we go to the Grand Manan to-morrow? Then we must bail out the boat, and get some grub in."

Billy threw off his temporary sadness, and sprang up, all alive to go to the work.

It was again a fair, bright autumn day, that the old sailor, with his two young companions, set off for the Grand Manan. No one but Ailie knew of the expedition or its object, and Johnny felt as heroic as if he were starting for a voyage of discovery around the world. The old sailor sat comfortably in the bows smoking his pipe, while the stout boys rowed him over the bay; and Billy was happy as a king in finding his boatmanship appreciated by a genuine sailor.

They reached the little beach, and safely moored their boat to a great rock, and then the old man led them down to the beautiful sands, and told Johnny how they found his father lying there, with the sunshine on his face, and looking so peaceful and happy. He then looked carefully at the rocks and the trees, and said,—

"This is the way we went to find a spot to bury him."

O, how beautiful it was in the autumn woods! The fragrance of the broad cedars, of the firs, and the pines filled the air, while here and there a maple or an oak, brilliant with its autumn glory, lighted up the scene with a touch of joy and beauty. Johnny had been very little in the woods, and their solemn stillness affected him with a deep reverence and awe. It seemed as if the grand old trees bent over him with a warm protecting love.

But the old man looked earnestly about for some landmark. In the seven years since the shipwreck on the island the trees had grown so fast that it was not easy to recognize the place, and in the agitation of the time the men had not marked the spot as carefully as they intended. More than once did the old man pause under a majestic pine tree, and say, "I think this must be the spot;" but they looked in vain for any signs that the mat of leaves and roots had been disturbed for hundreds of years. Nothing marked the spot with sufficient nearness to encourage them even to begin to dig. The old man began to look weary, and Johnny felt, after many hours thus spent, that it was useless to persist longer in an aimless search. Billy had roamed through

the woods with great delight, rousing up the partridges, and frightening the ground thrush from her nest; and he now came back, excited and hungry for his supper. He offered to go down to the shore and kindle a fire among the rocks, and cook the fish they had caught on their way thither.

While the old man and Johnny wandered hither and thither for a half hour longer, the sun began to descend behind the hills, and to throw its crimson glories over the water. The short day was nearly done, and under the thick trees they could scarcely distinguish any objects plainly. The old man turned towards the open beach, and Johnny sadly followed him. He stood gazing out on to the water, as if he did not know where to turn for guidance and help, when the old man kindly approached him, and said, —

“My boy, you mustn’t take this to heart so hard; it may be that it’s to teach ye something, as most everything does. Perhaps you shouldn’t think so much o’ that poor dead body that’s done its work long ago, but of the living folks that ye love now, and of the good Father above. We know that his body’s here somewhere, though we can’t find it; and so I feel sure my old friend

Stephen Eveleth," — and the old man pointed to the glowing heavens, — "is in all that glory, though I can't tell exactly where."

Johnny took the old man's hand in silence, but he was yet too full of disappointment to accept his consolation. He answered Billy's call to the supper; and at eighteen, after a day in the open air, one finds appetite even in the midst of sorrow.

They were to encamp on the island for the night, and start for home at daylight. Under the shelter of the boat, Johnny prepared a bed of leaves and branches for the old man, and threw over it such mats and clothing as they had, while he and Billy were quite able to rough it. But long after the others slept soundly, Johnny paced the little beach, under the clear light of the stars, and thought over his whole life, — over what had come to him in the past, and what lay before him in the future. He saw the responsibility which rested upon him to help his mother and sister, and the young family whose natural protector was of so little worth. He felt the presence of his father encouraging him to earnest struggle and manly affection, and the greater presence of Universal love and power,

which could never fail him. It was one of those supreme hours of faith and insight which leaves its stamp upon the whole life: and when, at last, warned by the changing stars that the night was far gone, he laid himself down by the side of his companions, he felt a strength and peace in his heart which he thought would never fail him.

“If I have not found my father’s dead body,” he said to himself, “I have surely felt his living presence.”

The morning light roused them to exertion, and they put off early in the boat, and had a good day’s fishing, and reached Carlton at evening.

“I’ll tell you what, boys!” said Bill Willson, as they parted, “don’t you want to take a trip up to Boston with me in the schooner. We left one of our hands sick there, and I guess I can get ye a chance to work your passage. Johnny ought to see more of the world than right here in Carlton, and Billy Paddles is at home wherever there’s salt water.”

Billy turned beseechingly to Johnny. “O, do go, and take me with you!”

“I thank you heartily for the offer,” said Johnny, “but I must think of it a bit. I shall never forget this trip with you, anyhow; and if

ever you need any help, come to me, and let me provide for you as if I were your son."


This was a great word from Johnny, and the old man shook his hand warmly as they parted, promising to meet on the morrow to decide upon the trip to Boston.

CHAPTER VIII.

TO BOSTON.

“ Still thou playest, short vacation
Fate grants each to stand aside;
Now must thou be man and artist;
'Tis the turning of the tide.

EMERSON.

O go to Boston, and seek better work and higher pay, had been a project in Johnny's mind ever since he left his uncle. Only one consideration had detained him, — his little sister, whose situation in her mother's house grew daily harder, and who looked to him as her comfort and protector. He had such a bad opinion of Tim that he didn't know what he might not do in his drunken humors; and he saw that his mother had no influence over him, and no courage to withstand his will. As he revolved these things over in his mind, he felt great need of a friend with whom he could consult, and the idea of Rose Maynard came to his mind. Though even younger than himself, her bright, clear good

sense had impressed Johnny very much. He felt sure of her sympathy, and altogether impelled to seek her advice rather than that of any older person. So, brushing up his clothes as smartly as he could, he went at evening to her house, and found a kind reception. Rose listened very patiently to his story of poor Ailie's hardships. What girl does not like to have her advice asked and her judgment respected, especially by a young man slightly her senior?

Having an invalid mother, who was quite unable to take care of the household, Rose had indeed more experience than most girls of her age, and she felt great sympathy for the orphan girl.

After much pondering, she said, "Johnny, Ailie must leave home; she never will learn anything there, and she will lose all her spirits and life. My two brothers are to be at home this winter, and I was telling mother, yesterday, that I did not see how I could do all the work without some help, — for mother isn't so well as last year, and needs nursing herself. Now I'll ask father to let me have Ailie to help me, and we'll give her board and clothes, and I'll teach her everything I know," said Rose, with the air of a matron of forty.

“O, will you?” said Johnny. “O, I should feel so happy to know she was with you! I think anybody would be happy with you,” he continued, speaking in the honest simplicity of his heart, and not knowing he had paid a compliment till he saw Rose’s blushes; and immediately he began to stammer, and twirl his hat, and not to know what he wanted to say, although a few minutes before there seemed to be a great deal to settle about Ailie’s coming. However, he did manage to say that he would not sail for two days yet, and that if his mother would consent he would bring Ailie there the night before his leaving home. Rose knew well enough that her father would agree to any plan of hers.

Johnny went out to his mother’s the next morning, and found to his great delight that Tim had gone away for a day or two, so that he had the great happiness of spending the day with his mother and Ailie, undisturbed by his presence. He went round to see old friends in the neighborhood, and was especially glad to hear from Jim, who had lately written to his uncle that he was well and thriving at the West, and was going to send for Johnny and Ailie to come out to him in a year or two. They laughed happily at the

message, but Johnny said, "No, Ailie; you've got to keep house for me as soon as I get money enough to buy one."

Billy Paddle came out in the afternoon, and they took a row on the river and skimmed the pot for the last time, even Ailie venturing out with them, which Billy considered a great honor. A merry time they had on the river, and Ailie fished out of the pot a bright bandanna handkerchief, which she gave to Billy for a remembrance. But the eddies dissolved, and the refuse that gathered together was scattered over the waters; and this warned them that the time had come for them, too, to part; and silently they rowed back to the shore, Johnny and Ailie sitting with hands clasped, in the stern, while Billy put forth all his strength to row them safely to land. Mary, who was a good mother at heart, yielded her consent to the separation from Ailie, which was so clearly for her good; for even she had begun to see that the home in which Tim Larkin ruled was a sorry place for a young girl to grow up in.

Ailie made up her little bundle, and they bade their mother good by, and started for the town. Billy would not go in, for he rarely entered a well-ordered household; but on the steps he gath-

ered courage to give Ailie the bundle which he had carried all day, and which proved to be a dress pattern of chintz, of the largest figures and gayest colors which Carlton afforded, and which seemed to put out Ailie's modest color entirely. She promised, however, to make it up, and wear it to welcome his return, and they parted. How many kisses Ailie gave Johnny at parting, and how much good advice Rose added, it would take long to tell. Rose promised to help Ailie to improve in her studies, and Johnny said he should expect a letter by every vessel that came to Boston. A correspondence by mail was too expensive a luxury then for them to indulge in. The simple manners of the place allowed Johnny to give the young friend who had relieved him of so great a care a kiss at parting, and he went on board the schooner with a light and sanguine heart, sure that he should carve his way to fortune and happiness.

In spite of their long experience on the river and bay, the boys felt the tortures of sea-sickness in a rough sea, on the broad Atlantic. Johnny kept up his courage pretty well, but Billy yielded like a child to all the sickness and depression. Johnny had to cheer him up and do his

work for him ; and even after he was better he found the confinement and discipline of the ship, slight as it was, entirely uncongenial. He could not stand being ordered about by the captain and mate, nor being roused from sleep at any time at the will of another. His boating skill did not avail him, and he had not sufficient resolution and steadiness to learn a new business. He grew moody and uncomfortable, and Johnny saw with great anxiety that he took with great relish the daily grog, which was then allowed, and that its effect was to make him excited and quarrelsome. He had himself determined to remain in Boston, for the winter at least, but he began to fear that Billy would be ill-fitted to make his way there, and that the companionship which he had found so welcome in his first loneliness, would be much less delightful in the steady occupation of the city. Still he felt so grateful to Billy for his help and sympathy in his greatest need, that he could not think of shaking him off, and tried very hard to plan some course of life which would be for his poor friend's good as well as his own.

When they arrived in Boston, poor Billy's deficiencies became even more apparent. Johnny was full of eager curiosity about everything he saw ;

he examined every cart, and carriage, and machine which differed from those in Carlton, and he would stand before a hardware shop window for an hour, until he had discovered the use and make of every tool displayed in it. His precious rule was constantly in his hand, and he measured the proportions of houses, and wagons, and boats, and everything which he thought he might ever want to construct. On Sunday he went to churches, to enlarge his ideas of what others thought and felt on the subject of religion; and he attended every meeting he knew of where he could have a chance to hear older men talk. Billy followed him like a dog, and with as little interest in the subject of his inquiries. He would curl down in some sheltered place and go to sleep, while Johnny was engaged in his examinations. They slept on board the schooner while she staid in port, but after the first few days given to satisfying his eager curiosity, Johnny, or John, as we ought to call him, now that he is fairly launched upon the great world, began to look out for work. He had to ask for himself and companion both; but, alas! one glance at poor Billy was enough to secure his refusal in any mechanic's shop. It was in vain that John tried his utmost to keep

him neat and trig in his appearance ; the wild gypsy would peep out in his matted hair, and strange clothes, and uncouth language.

A fortnight was thus spent, and in vain, so far as procuring permanent work, though John had done a few odd jobs about the wharves, when Bill Willson told them that the schooner was to sail for Carlton the next day, and they must decide whether they would go back in her. Although Carlton, and Ailie, and I think I might add Rose, pulled pretty strongly at John's heart-strings, yet he manfully decided at once to remain ; but Billy was overcome with homesick longings for his boat, and the river, and the wild free life, and felt that he could not stay even with John. For he, too, saw that the time had come for their lives to part, and that, tenderly as they might hereafter love each other, they could not walk together through the world. John nearly exhausted his slender means to pay Billy's passage home, that he might not be troubled by a sense of dependence, and expended a few shillings on a present for Ailie, of which Billy took charge. Billy's great comfort seemed to be in thinking of this important commission, and the pleasure it would give to Ailie.

“And remember to let me hear of you whenever Ailie writes.”

As John took leave of Billy at the wharf, he said to him very solemnly, “Billy, I want to say one word to you. When my father left me, he made me promise not to drink a drop of rum or spirit till he came back, and I never have. Will you promise me the same?”

“But your father never came back,” said poor Billy.

“But if you’ll promise me this, I’ll promise you that I’ll come back in two years from next spring, if I’m alive; and if not, Billy, ’twon’t do you any harm to remember your friend’s last words as I have my father’s.” Billy held out his hand and promised; the call, “All aboard!” was heard; he sprang on the deck; the schooner was loosed from her moorings, and as she went swiftly out of the harbor, John watched her till he could see no longer on account of the distance of the vessel and the dimness of his eyes, and then felt that the last link was severed between him and all he had ever known or loved.

But he had no time to waste; he must seek a lodging for that very night, and work to keep him alive. Among the odd jobs he had found, he had

one day helped an old Scotchman to lift some heavy planks into his workshop.

He was a hard-featured, dry-looking man; but John had observed a little shelf of books in the shop, and had noticed the great accuracy of his measurements, and the nicety of his work. He felt sure that he should learn something in working with this man; and as there was evidently a room or two over the workshop, he hoped that he might lodge with him also. He accordingly betook himself to the old man's shop, and asked him if he didn't want a hand to help him through the winter.

"I dinna want any lad in the shop; they waste the stuff and spoil the work," replied the Scotchman. "I'll hire ane when I want him."

"But I am a poor fatherless lad," said John, "and I want a place to lodge, too; and if you'd let me sleep here, I'd make your fire in the morning, and I'd do everything for you; and I wouldn't waste the stuff, for I know how to work; for I have had a strict master, if he was a hard one."

"And ye've rin away from him, ye graceless loon!"

"Yes, sir, I have," said John, boldly; "because he abused my dead father's name, and he knocked me down; and I think, sir," he said, "catching a

gleam in the old man's eye, "you'd have done the same when you were young."

A twinkle in the corners of the Scotchman's mouth was the only answer; but he pointed to some planks in the corners, and read from a memorandum.

"Mak me a box, nicely dovetailed, twenty-four inches long by eighteen three quarters wide, and fourteen deep, with a nice-fitting cover, and I'll see if I can mak something of ye."

Out came John's little stump of a pencil, and he noted down the dimensions carefully, and then took out his rule and began to measure the boards. He was so careful to measure very exactly, that he had scarcely to take off a chip from his first cuttings, and in a few hours he had completed the box with great exactness.

The Scotchman eyed him closely, but said little until he had finished, when he said, —

"A vera neat piece o' work for a young lad. I think ye can learn summat. There's a little room above that naebody sleeps in, if ye mind to clear it out and use it. I'll gie ye that, and a fair share o' the work when a job comes in; but ye mind it's dull times coming on noo, and when ye can find better employ, ye shall have the chance."

John was very glad to close with this offer ; and the old man invited him to share his supper of oatmeal porridge which he had cooking on the stove in the inner room. He found some old lumber in his bedroom, out of which he made himself a frame bedstead, and Mr. Troop gave him some old matting which he could fill with straw to lie on. At his leisure hours he made a table and chair, and so in a short time had a bedroom which was at least as comfortable as any to which he had been of late accustomed.

John's new master, Mr. Troop, was a singular character, but well fitted to help him in the course of life he had chosen. He had a keen but somewhat fanciful mind, and delighted in exercising it on every variety of speculation ; and yet he was very thorough and exact in his own special work. He was opinionated and obstinate in his views, and could not easily act with others ; and though warm-hearted and ready to help, he was short and crusty in manner. Misfortune had exiled him from his native country, and stripped him of all domestic ties, and he had not the ambition to engage in large undertakings, but worked on in his own way on small jobs, which enabled him to satisfy his slender wants, and yet left him

time for the miscellaneous reading and study that formed his sole recreation.

But man, after all, is a social being ; and the old man would hardly confess to himself the pleasure he felt in finding in John a young companion with an omnivorous appetite for knowledge, and ready to accept his instruction in mechanics or philosophy. John entered upon a course of study of arithmetic and geometry, and learned something of linear drawing and the use of mathematical instruments in the long evenings of winter ; and while he was working at the bench, Mr. Troop would often recite to him from his favorite poets, or entertain him with his own wild speculations.

“Where div ye think the birds gang in winter ?” said Mr. Troop, one day.

“I’m sure I don’t know, sir ; I always supposed they went to some warmer place.”

“So they do — so they do : but where ? is the question ; and I’ve found it out. They gang till the moon.”

“To the moon ?”

“Yes ; where it is always warm and shining. Ye ken there’s twa days in every year when the moon comes just as near the earth as ever she

can ; and I've watched it mony a year, and it's just about thae twa days that the birds gang off and come back again, and so where shuld they go else but to the moon ? ”

This question was unanswerable, as were many others which they discussed ; but they served to quicken the young man's intellect, and make him ready to catch an explanation whenever it offered.

In wandering from one church to another, as he was apt to do on Sundays, John one day dropped into the church where the great apostle of liberal religion, Dr. Channing, was then preaching, and in the perfection of his powers. John knew nothing of his fame, but he was charmed and melted by the persuasive eloquence of the speaker, which seemed to be setting to music every thought of his soul. From that time he went to hear him every Sunday ; and as he repeated to Mr. Troop the substance of the sermons, and held long discussions with him upon every new idea presented, he gained in largeness of thought as well as religious feeling and moral principle.

This may seem rather a dull life for a young man of nineteen ; but it was so much richer and more satisfactory than any John had led before, that he did not yet feel the want of younger and

gayer society. His correspondence with the two girls kept his affections warm and bright, and he rejoiced to see by every letter of Ailie's that she was improving in her style and penmanship, and from her account of her life, that she was happy now, and being fitted for future usefulness. He was able to support himself through the winter, and even indulge in the luxury of sending Ailie a book occasionally, which seemed to be selected with reference quite as much to Rose's taste as to hers; but then Ailie had Rose to help her, and it was very desirable to tempt her on to higher themes of study.

Early in the spring a little incident occurred which helped John to better employment, and which also illustrates Mr. Troop's character. Mr. Mason, a large builder, wished a bath-house constructed, and it was necessary that a part of the work should be done at low tide. As he was short of hands, he came for Mr. Troop to put up a sort of chamber into which the water would flow. It was not necessary that the work should be handsome, but only strong enough to resist the ebb and flow of the water. John went, of course, to assist his master, and felt very much at home in any encounter with the tide, though

Boston harbor seemed a very puny matter to his magnificent river and bay at home.

Only five or six hours could be used in the work, which must be completed before the tide rose above the level of the platform on which the room was to be built. But Mr. Troop measured every plank as carefully and slowly as if he were putting on the panellings of a parlor. Mr. Mason remonstrated with him in vain ; at last he said, "I shall lock this door, which shuts you off from the main building, and only open it when the room is completed ; the water will soon begin to rise, and if you don't hurry you will be drowned."

Mr. Troop was not pleased with this suggestion, but he heard the key turned behind him. He doggedly worked on, however, until he saw the tide begin to turn, when, seeing that his planks at least would be carried away, even if he were not drowned himself, he put his rule in his pocket, and sawed off his planks by the eye, while John nailed them on with all the expedition that was compatible with thoroughness. They worked on, hardly exchanging a word, and had driven the last nail just as the water began to wet their feet. Mr. Troop knocked loudly at the door, which Mr. Mason opened, laughing, and complimenting

him upon his speed : but the old man would not be appeased, and went off, muttering, " He would be responsible for nae siccan work." At the next low tide John had the curiosity to go and measure the work they had done under such pressure. Mr. Mason happened to be on the spot, and was interested in the experiment. To their surprise they found that every board fitted as exactly as those most carefully measured, showing that long practice had so perfectly trained the carpenter's eye and hand, that they worked automatically. This was a good lesson to John of the value of training. Mr. Mason, too, was interested in the lad's zeal for his trade, and a few days after called on Mr. Troop, and told him if he would spare John he would give him regular work through the summer.

In this large, busy establishment John found pleasant companionship, active work, and greater profit; but as he still kept his lodging with Mr. Troop, his expenses were small, and he continued his studies. He paid especial attention to the strength of materials for building, and already looked forward to being a master builder himself. His first object in saving was to get a chest of nice tools of his own, without which he felt as if

he lacked a right hand ; and in a few months he had saved a sum sufficient for this purpose. But though John was not extravagant himself, he had not yet learned when and how to say No to others. His imaginative, sanguine temperament led him to believe in everybody's success, and his gratitude for the kindly help he had received prompted him to extend the same to others. So, when a fellow-workman, who was going to set up for himself, wanted a little money to purchase stock, John's savings were readily offered. But the young man did not succeed, and the money was never repaid. John felt the disappointment keenly, but, fortunately, he confided it to Mr. Troop, who advised him to guard against a similar occurrence, by asking his master to provide him the requisite box of tools, stopping the amount out of his weekly pay. So sped away the summer, without any remarkable incident ; and so much satisfaction had John given his master, that he was kept on for indoor work through the winter, which gave him an opportunity of seeing the interior of fine houses, and enlarging his ideas of life and of beauty. Already his house on the St. John River began to take shape and proportion to his mind's eye.

Still another year passed, and the spring came when John had promised Billy that he would return if alive ; and he felt, indeed, an earnest longing to see the old place and his old friends. He had heard nothing of Billy for a year, and what Ailie wrote him of his mother's family made him feel as if he ought to be near her, to protect her in case of need. Tim grew constantly more violent and abusive, and his bad habits had increased so that he was hardly fit for work half of the time.

John made up his mind to return to his native place, whose capacity for growth he foresaw, and where he felt that the skill he had acquired would place him in the front rank of mechanics. Neither could he bear to change his nationality, or give up the river and its glorious scenery, which was interlinked with all his boyish recollections.

So, on a fine May morning, with three hundred dollars in his pocket, he embarked on a coasting schooner for home, after bidding an affectionate farewell to his old Scotch master and his fellow-workmen.

“ I shall miss ye sair,” said the old man ; “ but ye’re right to gang hame while ye ha’ a mither

and friends to gang to; but it's like I'll niver see ye again."

"O, yes," said John; "I'll build a house for me and Ailie next fall, and you must come down in the summer, and we'll try to spear a salmon just as your favorite Scott describes it."

"Na, na," said the old man; "ye maun come to me, for I'll never go amang strangers again."


"Well, if God prospers me, I will come," said John.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NEW HOUSE.

“There dwelt we, as happy as birds in their bowers,
Unfettered as bees that in gardens abide ;
We could do what we chose with the land, — it was ours ;
And for us the brook murmured that ran by its side.”

WORDSWORTH.

 HERE was a great contrast between the strong, manly fellow, twenty-one years old, conscious of his freedom, and secure in his skilled work, and with three hundred dollars in his pocket, and the almost vagabond lad who had gone off in the schooner with Billy Paddle. But so easily do we fit ourselves to improved circumstances, that John himself hardly thought of the change, but walked through the street with the quick, firm gait which belonged to his two years of successful work. But Ailie and Rose hardly knew him, though they had been watching for hours. Rose was the first to see him ; but it was Ailie who cried, “It is he ! it is Johnny !

but, O, Rose, should you have known him?" and rushed down to the door, to throw herself in his arms, and sob and laugh with joy.

"Why, Ailie, how you have grown!" said John. "Why, let me look at you! aren't you a beauty?"

He didn't ask the question of Rose, perhaps because he thought it unnecessary; but it were hard to say which he looked at with most pleasure, — the fair curls and delicate color of his sister, or the rich brown braids and ruddier hue of her friend.

"O, Rose, how can I thank you for all you have done for her?" said he. "Why, she's a real little lady, just like you."

The girls laughed at this double-barrelled compliment, and then began a string of affectionate questions and answers.

Mr. Maynard insisted on John's staying to supper, and kindly invited him to pass the night; but John, with proud independence, had engaged a lodging in the village.

Mr. Maynard was, like most of the Carlton men, a dealer in lumber, having a saw-mill on the river, and besides this a carpenter's shop in the town. He offered John the place of foreman in the shop,

which he was only too happy to accept ; and he went to work at once, determined to do his utmost, both for his employer and himself.

For now the time had come which he had so long dreamed of, and why should not he and Ailie have a home of their own on the river's bank ? It rested only with himself, he thought ; and, a few evenings after his arrival, he asked Ailie to walk out to his mother's with him, on the way laying open his plans, saying they must choose a spot of ground to build on, and as soon as work was slack he would begin upon the house.

A little green knoll on the bank of the river, with the land sloping towards the south ; attracted them both, and Ailie thought it might be bought, as there was only an old shed upon it, and the owner was going into the fishing business. They looked at it many times, and it soon became fixed in their minds as the spot for their future home. The owner's absence alone prevented Johnny from investing his money in it at once.

But in the mean time, as we have said, our young hero was not quite as wise as Solomon, and I fear his head was a little turned with his success and the attention he received from those

whom he had once thought far above him. He had been so much shut out from young companionship, that it was now very pleasant to him; and although he did not neglect Ailie and Rose, but found time to pass an hour with them every day or two, he yet made one of many a merry company who filled the air with revelry. He plausibly argued with himself that he must know the men with whom he was to live, and that this social popularity would help him forward in his business; and yet a haunting consciousness that he was not living up to his best ideal was ever around him. The vision of the Grand Manan did not seem to suit with these nights of pleasure. Blessed for him was it that the pledge which he had kept so sacredly prevented him from drowning these thoughts in wine or brandy; and so, though we cannot say that he passed this ordeal with no smell of fire on his garments, at least he never lost his self-respect, or consciousness of a higher nature. It sometimes seems as if the one weakness of a good man brings him heavier punishment than the many faults of a lower nature: perhaps this quick retribution saves him from falling altogether below his proper plane. John at least was saved by what seemed a hard

piece of fortune. Among his boon companions of this time was a gay, dashing fellow, whose off-hand, pleasant manners won him general favor. He sang, and told stories, and was the life of every party, and John found him a very fascinating associate. Philip Masters asked John to introduce him to his sister, and so John ventured to take him to Mr. Maynard's; but on Rose his pleasant manners made no impression, and she did not ask him to come again. John felt a little piqued by this slight of his friend, especially as Philip had praised both Rose and Ailie very highly. Little Ailie thought John must be right in his opinion, and, not insensible to Philip's flattering attentions, she allowed him to join her when alone in the street, and walk with her out to her mother's on several occasions. John saw the intimacy without fear, and looked forward with pleasure to its possible termination in a union between his sister and his friend.

While under this pleasant impression, Philip one day confided to John, when he and Ailie were together, his plans for business. He proposed to establish a house for carrying on the salmon fishery on a large scale, having a branch in Boston, and a fast-sailing schooner to run

between the two ports, and carry the fish to market. He said he had capital enough to start the enterprise, but it was all so invested in the business in Boston that he did need a few hundreds to begin immediately buying up fish in Carlton.

"If you were rich, old fellow, I shouldn't have to go far to borrow it, I know," said he, with an off-hand air, as if he did not think John had a cent in the world. John felt his money burn in his pocket; he thought the scheme a good one; he had entire trust in his friend, and he consulted Ailie's eyes, which seemed to him full of trust and love in both him and Philip.

"Perhaps I'm not quite so poor as you think for," he said. "I don't make any great show myself, but I'm all the better able to help a friend, perhaps. Would sixty or seventy pounds be of any use to you for two or three months? I don't believe the land will run away," he said to Ailie, "and I can't get to work on the house before September, we're so driven at the shop. So that much is at your service, Philip, if it will help you."

"It will help me now very much, for these fellows, you know, want ready money for their

salmon," answered Philip; "but as soon as I get returns from Boston, I can repay it quite in time to build the little dove-cote, though I won't promise you that I shall not try to steal the dove away from it."

This was an aside to John, but quite plain enough to cover Ailie's pretty face with blushing confusion.

"I'll give you my note," he added, "to make it perfectly sure."

A week passed, and John still felt very happy in his kind act, when he was surprised one evening not to find Philip at their usual place of rendezvous. Fearing that he might be ill, he went to his boarding-house, and was surprised to hear that he had left, the day before, for Halifax.

"When will he come back?" asked John, carelessly.

"I don't think he means to come back at all," said the landlady; "he's taken all his traps off secretly, and he hasn't paid his board; and I only heard from another man that he'd gone off secretly to Halifax last night. He hasn't behaved like a gentleman, though he was so pleasant-spoken."

John began to have strange misgivings, and he

walked down street to see if he could learn anything to reassure him ; but the same story met him at every turn. Philip had borrowed money of everybody that he could, and his whole show of business was a mere pretence.

Mortified and heart-sick, John passed the old Quaker's shop, and paused, as the good Friend stood in the door.

"Ah! friend John," said Ephraim Jenkins, "thee is looking very sober; has thee, too, nibbled at the bait, and does thee feel the hook in thy mouth."

"I've been a fool, indeed," said John, trying to rally his spirits; "but I believe you are partly to blame for it, friend—"

"I! What does thee mean?"

"Why, who taught me to trust in strangers, by letting me have goods when I was a good-for-nothing runaway."

"Ah! thee thinks thee has me there; but I did not lend thee all of my substance, but only what thee needed for honest work; and if thee had been dishonest, thee could not have made much bad use of it. But come in, lad, and have thy supper with me, and we'll try to improve this discipline for thy good."

John could not refuse this invitation, and the long hour's talk with the worthy Quaker, who had been watching his course since his return, helped to clear his eyes from the mists that were dazzling them, and to strengthen his resolution to forsake his idle pleasures, and seek more solid happiness.

In spite of all the good Friend's sympathy, John's heart sank within him at the thought of breaking his misfortune to Ailie and Rose; but one saying of his friend strengthened him.

"When thee has a disagreeable thing to do, do it now: it's like having a tooth pulled; the ache after isn't so bad as the ache before."

He could not but feel guilty towards Ailie in having so imprudently encouraged her intimacy with one of whom he knew so little; and he dreaded seeing her suffering from an unwise attachment. He remembered Rose's early distrust of Philip, and felt as if he should have to suffer from her "I told you so," which is often the keenest reproach for a mistake.

The girls were indeed shocked and grieved when he told his story; but Rose gently comforted him by tracing his error to his own goodness of heart, without a word of triumph in her

own superior wisdom, while, to his great relief, Ailie seemed to feel the delay in building the house more than the loss of Philip.

He then told her that he had met Mr. Johnson, the owner of the land, who had just returned, but he had not the heart to speak to him.

“O, do so at once!” said Rose; “even knowing the price of the land, and the possibility of securing it, will seem one step towards owning it.”

John left the girls, very much comforted, and most wholesomely ashamed of himself, that, with such real true friends as he had found to-night, he should have been led away by mere outward show.

Day and night, night and day, John turned over in his mind plan after plan for repairing his error and making up the sum he had so imprudently lost, even in sufficient amount to enable him to pay a part of the purchase-money of the land; but for a long time all his thinking was fruitless, for his time was so fully occupied in the business of the shop that he could do no extra work. To save every penny of his wages not absolutely necessary for his daily support was all he could

do. But, a few weeks after Philip's departure, his eye was caught by an advertisement that the annual drawing for fishing-grounds would take place the following week, and that all citizens of Carlton twenty-one years of age had a right to enter their names and take their chance in the lottery. John stopped and thought. He was twenty-one years of age, and entitled to his chance as well as others. Perhaps my readers will need a little explanation of this advertisement. Owing to the form of the banks and other causes, a certain part of the shore near to the town of Carlton was much more suitable for carrying on the fishing business than any other; but this shore had never been sold outright to any one, but each citizen had made use of it as he pleased. As the business increased it became necessary to decide between different claimants to the ground, and the old-fashioned method of drawing lots had been resorted to, and now for some years had become a settled custom; and, as the privilege rose in value, even those who had no idea of using the land themselves registered their names, and if successful in drawing a good location, sold out their rights to those who really needed the land. John hastened at once to the office, made oath to

his name, age, birth, and residence in Carlton, and so secured his chance for a fishing-ground.

As Luck is one of those capricious powers which often befriends those most who seek her the least, John, who kept about his business, thinking very little of the drawing, was so fortunate as to draw Number One, which entitled him to the first choice of any lot on the shore. He knew very well that Mr. Johnson, the owner of the land he wanted to buy, had a lot for which he had drawn or purchased the right the year before, and on which he had put up a shed and some other conveniences, which it would cost him some trouble to move.

“Now you’ve got a splendid chance,” said one of his acquaintances; “just choose that lot, and Johnson’ll have to pay you double what it’s worth; for he must keep it, anyhow.”

John turned away, pondering this advice in his mind, and wondering what he had better do. It seemed to him a little mean to take such advantage of Mr. Johnson’s necessity, and yet it certainly was a temptation. As he walked home thoughtfully to his dinner, he passed Mr. Maynard’s door, and Rose stood there chatting with some young friend. She gave him a bright smile

and "How d'ye do?" as he passed, and the thought at once darted into his mind, "What shall I like to tell them, this evening, that I have done?" This thought lightened up his conscience and strengthened his will, and as soon as the day's work was over he went directly to Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson was about an average man, shrewd and plain in his dealings, and he was a little surprised by John's first remark, which was not after the manner of Carlton traders, who loved to drive a close bargain.

"Mr. Johnson, you have a lot of land on the bluffs that I want very much, and I have the right to the first choice of fishing-grounds, which I understand is very important to you. Now, sir, if we talk the matter over, don't you think we can make an arrangement that will suit us both?"

The straightforwardness of this question opened the way at once, and, after a little discussion, the matter was satisfactorily settled.

John was to have an acre of ground in immediate possession, and the first chance to purchase any of the remaining twenty acres which Mr. Johnson owned in the neighborhood. He agreed on his part to give Mr. Johnson the advantage of his choice in the lottery on this and all future drawings.

The agreement was signed on the spot, and John went to bed that night with the proud consciousness, so dear to Anglo-Saxon hearts, of being a landholder in his native town.

When Rose heard that John had really secured his land, she said to Ailie, "I can tell you now, dear Ailie, what I have been dreading to do for a week—that the time will soon come when we must part. Aunt Sally, mother's sister, has lost her husband, and is coming here to live, with her two children. Ma wants her very much, and Pa thinks it will be easier for me; but I shall hate to have you go, and you must not until John's house is ready."

"O, I shan't want to go away," said Ailie; "you've been just like a sister to me, Rose."

"Well, dear, you shall always come to me when you need me: and I shall miss you dreadfully; but, then, we shall not be very far apart."

John felt the force of this reason for haste, for he saw that Ailie could not remain with propriety after Aunt Sally's arrival, and on no account would he permit her to return to his mother's house. Rose advised her to spend the time, until John should get the house finished, in learning something of the dress-making trade, so that she

could take in sewing; for Ailie was not willing to depend wholly upon John.

John at once went to work to dig and stone his cellar, and as Mr. Maynard kindly offered him lumber and all his conveniences for building on trust, and at low rates, he went on as fast as he could. While the long days still continued he himself worked before and after hours, and he was so popular with the men under him at the shop, that some of them often came and lent a hand for love. Even Ailie could hand nails and do many things to help the work on, and Rose helped it forward very much, by coming and looking on, and admiring the neatness and quickness of John's handiwork. John contented himself with a very humble beginning: the house was to have a large kitchen, a sitting-room, and two chambers, — one for him and one for Ailie. These rooms were to be light, airy, and well built, with a good cellar, a good chimney, and a roof that would not leak. Such were the first principles of building which he had learned from his old master, Mr. Troop.

By the last of September the house was so far completed as to be habitable, although much inside work remained to be done, which John

promised to finish in the winter. He had little money for furnishing, but he made frames for bedsteads, and a wooden table for the kitchen, and they bought half a dozen chairs and the few dishes that were absolutely necessary. Some sacks filled with straw formed their first beds, and Rose presented Ailie with good warm comforters of her own making. Even their mother, out of her poverty of means and of spirit, gave them a rag mat, which she had woven for her own best parlor. A shelf for books was the first article of luxury which John made, and poor Billy's last gift, which Ailie had outgrown as a gown, made some brilliant curtains for the sitting-room windows. Even the skimming of the pot contributed to their stores, when they indulged in an occasional row; for a pail or a tub sometimes came floating down, which John mended up and made useful in the household. Ailie got a little sewing to do, and John had good steady wages; and so every day added to their store of possessions, and every new article of use or beauty made a little jubilee in the house: most of all, when John one day brought home a Yankee clock, and put it up in the kitchen, so that Ailie

could regulate her household affairs to match his exacting punctuality.

By Christmas time the little household presented a picture of comfort which would seem hardly credible to any one who did not know what constant industry, inspired by love, can do. They ate their Christmas supper at Mr. Maynard's; but when Ailie came home, she found a neat little work table which John had been secretly making for her Christmas gift, while a book from Rose, and three pairs of warm, woollen hose of Ailie's own knitting, told him how he was remembered. In the long winter evenings John continued the studies he had begun in Boston; but often he read an hour or two to Ailie, while she sewed or knit, and thus helped to enlarge his own taste and to cultivate hers. Rose, who could now leave her invalid mother, often came out to take tea with them, and then insisted on the readings being continued; and some other of the young people occasionally dropped in, so that they had many a pleasant little gathering, a few shagbarks or apples, sometimes making it seem quite like a party. John, of course, always went home with Rose, and slept all the sounder for his late walk in the cold, crisp air.

Shall we say this was the happiest time of John's life? Yes, if the rosebud be the perfection of the flower; for all the joys of life were in beautiful bud, if not yet in full maturity. So the winter passed usefully and happily away. Summer came, and went also, with no very marked incident. John improved steadily in his business capacity, and Mr. Maynard threw a great deal of responsibility upon him. Ailie improved in her housekeeping, and the home became more and more comfortable and happy.

It was a cold winter night in February, and a storm was howling about the house, — as New Brunswick storms can howl when they try their best, — when John and Ailie, who were cosily reading by the fire, heard a loud knock at the door.

“Who can be coming in this storm?” said John.

“Something must be the matter at Ma's,” said Ailie.

“Or at Mr. Maynard's. Heap up the fire, Ailie, while I go to the door.”

A tall stranger, white with snow, stood at the door, and unceremoniously entered when it was opened.

“Why, Johnny, here you are, well and hearty. I shouldn’t have known you, though, if I’d seen you anywhere unexpectedly.”

John was puzzled for a moment; then the bright, frank expression beamed out from the bearded face, and he exclaimed, “Why, Jim Howard, where in the world did you come from?”

“From Illinois, to be sure, — straight as an arrow. I’ve been too busy farming to get away before; but I determined to shut up the log-house, and come off home this winter to see all the folks. I stopped at uncle Ben’s last night, and started early this afternoon to find you; but I had to stop at most every house, and I’ve taken three teas at least. But here I am at last. Can you give me a bed to-night?”

“A bed to-night! For a week, at least!” said John. “You must stay with us; put on some more slabs, Ailie; we’ll soon thaw you out.” The pine wood roared in the ample fireplace, and lit up the kitchen with a glow of warmth and light, and Jim was startled as he saw Ailie’s face in its radiance.

“Why, is this little Ailie?” he said; “she’s bloomed out like a damask rose.”

They sat up late, talking over their different lives. Jim had done well at the west, and had a nice farm now of his own, with a good, substantial log-house, and he liked the country first rate. He had got quite republicanized in his notions, had already served as selectman, and shouldn't wonder if he went to the legislature next winter. He had many a story to tell of the free life in Illinois, and wanted Johnny to promise to go back with him.

But Johnny steadily refused. "I couldn't live on your great flat prairies," he said. "I want my swift running river, and the great open bay, and the ebb and flow of the tide."

Jim staid, now at one house and now at another, for nearly two months, and merriment and fun followed him wherever he went. There were constant sleighing parties and sliding or skating, besides dancing and other frolics. Ailie was a frequent partaker in these pleasures, which John entered into more sparingly, as he was still deeply interested in study; and his old friend, Mr. Troop, had sent him some new books, which he had not yet mastered.

Mrs. Maynard died during this period, and John felt too deep a sympathy with Rose in her afflic-

tion to enjoy the parties without her. One night he sat up late over his book, expecting the return of Jim and Ailie.

After they came in, Jim still sat by the fire, seeming indisposed to go to bed, although Ailie had retired at once. They sat in silence a little while, John occasionally gaping rather impolitely, but quite unheeded by his companion. At last Jim broke out:—

“It’s come true, Johnny. You and Ailie have got the house by the river-side—haven’t you?”

“Why, yes,” said John, to whom it seemed a well-known and obvious fact.

“And do you remember my part in the bargain?” said Jim; “that I was to have Ailie for my wife.”

“What!” exclaimed John; “you can’t think of such a thing.”

“Indeed I do, Johnny,” said Jim. “I’ve always loved her since she was a little girl, and I’ve come back all this way to try to win her; and I think she likes me now a bit; but I thought it wasn’t quite fair to ask her till I’d talked with you about it.”

How strangely blind brothers are, to be sure. He had never dreamed that the dear little Ailie

he had cared for all his life could be dearer to anybody else.

It wasn't a pleasant thought exactly, and his sober face rather discouraged his friend.

"You ain't a-going to say No, to begin with — are you?" said Jim.

"I've no right to," said John; "I suppose I must give her up some time, and you're a brave, honest fellow, and I'd rather you'd have her than anybody in the world; but it does seem strange."

"It's human nater, though," said Jim. "Don't you think you could like somebody even better than Ailie, if you tried very hard?"

John did not answer this question, but he held out his hand to Jim, and said, —

"If Ailie loves you, I won't stand in the way. She's been a dear good sister to me, and she'll make a good wife, if ever woman does."

The next evening Jim and Ailie rode out together in the crisp, clear moonlight. When they came home she threw her arms about her brother's neck and kissed him.

"Is it so, Ailie?" he said. "Must I give up my little housekeeper?"

"O, don't think hard of me, Johnny!" she said.

“Hard of you, my darling! Why, no; I wish you joy with all my heart. I wish Jim could settle down here with us; but it isn’t fair to ask him to give up his bright prospects. Perhaps some day we shall be together again.”

But when it came out that Jim must return by April, to be ready for the opening spring, and he begged that Ailie should go with him, the parting seemed very near; but there was no alternative. Ailie could not well go out to him alone, and the journey was long and expensive for Jim to come on for her.

“You must go, Ailie,” said John, firmly; “your lot and his are one now; and who gives, gives wholly.”


The quiet wedding was over, and Ailie had gone to her new home. A hired servant came in every morning for a few hours, to do the work of John’s house; but nothing replaced the sweet, womanly presence in the home.

CHAPTER X.

THE BRIDGE.

“But, meanwhile, axe and lever
Have manfully been plied,
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide;
And with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And like a dam the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream.”

MACAULAY.

UT, fortunately for John, an enterprise of great importance now began to be talked of, which interested him very deeply, and filled up his time and thoughts, if it did not the empty place in the home. Some of the citizens were anxious to have a bridge over the river connecting the prosperous town of Carlton with its rapidly-growing neighbor St. John, on the other side. The intercourse was constant between the two places, and the great changes of the tide, and frequent fogs, made the river communication inconvenient, and often dangerous. Mr. Maynard

took an active part in the project, and a company was formed to build the bridge. John had sent to his friend for some books on the subject of bridge-building, as soon as he heard of this plan, and he studied them diligently, that he might thoroughly understand the whole structure. He remembered his early experience at Fredericton ; but this was a far greater undertaking. A company was formed with ample capital, and the care of the work was intrusted to an engineer named Smythe, who had a reputation for great learning and skill, and was very confident he could make a superb structure, which would delight the citizens and add to his own fame.

The contract for a part of the lumber and carpentry work was given to Mr. Maynard, and he confided to John Eveleth the superintendence of the men. This was a very welcome appointment to John, who would thus have an opportunity for knowing every detail of the structure of the bridge. But he was greatly mortified to find that Mr. Smythe felt quite too much above a carpenter to allow him to see his plans, and he tried in vain to learn from him on what principle the bridge was to be supported, or the plan of its construction. So, while he worked busily at prepar-

ing the stuff, he could only watch with interest the laying of the piers and mason work, as they were actually built, and conjecture from his own knowledge the intentions of the architect.

It happened that Mr. Maynard wished John to go up the river on some business, which detained him three or four weeks. When he came back he found that the work had gone on very rapidly, and that chains were already attached to the towers for supporting the bridge.

As he stood looking at them, he observed to a workman near him, —

“What can be the object in putting up these temporary chains? I don’t understand it.”

“Why, them’s the chains to hold the bridge,” said the man; “we’re going to lay the beams on ’em right off.”

“It is not possible,” said John to himself, as he examined them again and again.

The chains, instead of being carried over the supports and fastened in the ground beyond, came to an end at the tower; so that any weight in the middle of the bridge acted with great power upon the resistance they could offer.

“Why, this is perfect madness,” he said to

himself ; “ this bridge will not bear its own weight.”

He went home and consulted his books, and he found there the principle fully explained, and a warning against the very error he saw committed here.

He sat long in thought. “ What business was it of his? He should be sure to make enemies, and be called a presumptuous fool, for supposing he knew better than his elders,” But again and again he went over the subject, and he was so sure of the fact, that he felt the guilt of murder would lie on his soul if he failed to give warning of the danger. After some consideration, he decided that the most honorable thing was to go to Mr. Smythe, who was now at St. John.

He did so the next evening, and sent up his name, begging to see the gentleman on very important business.

The gentleman had been dining with some of the directors, but he at last consented to see the importunate individual for five minutes.

John, who, we know was somewhat direct and straightforward in his dealings, went to the point at once.

“ Mr. Smythe, you may think I am taking a

great liberty, but I feel bound to say to you that there is a fatal defect in the construction of the bridge, which will endanger its safety at any moment. As the chains are fastened at present, they will not sustain the bridge itself, much less the precious burden of life and property which may be placed upon it. Can I have understood aright that this is their final arrangement?"

"Certainly, sir; if that be any business of yours," replied Mr. Smythe, very coldly. "The bridge is constructed according to the most scientific methods. I myself have calculated the strain, and have proved that the bridge will sustain thirty times the weight that is ever likely to be placed upon it."

"Mr. Smythe," replied Eveleth, "I have not had the advantage of a scientific education, which I deeply regret; but I have used every opportunity to study into these matters, and have had some practical experience, though a young man, and if I know anything of the qualities of wood and iron, those chains will not bear the strain of the bridge itself, much less of the load of teams and passengers which will rush to cross it as soon as it is completed."

"Mr. Eveleth," replied the engineer, "I thank

you for your information; but I must conclude that you do not know anything of the qualities of wood and iron, as the bridge will stand after you and I are in our graves."

"Will you lay this matter before the directors?" said John. "I do not wish to go to work secretly to injure you."

"Certainly not," replied Mr. Smythe. "The work has been confided to me, and I am quite confident that I can manage it to the satisfaction of the directors, even without your assistance."

John tried again and again to make some impression, begging Mr. Smythe to look at his book, which corroborated his own opinion so fully.

"I thank you for your offer of assistance in my studies," he replied, with the same cool satire; "but as I had the honor to learn my profession under the first masters, I will not trouble you for your valuable aid. Good evening, Mr. Eveleth. I advise you to cross the river always in your canoe, and not trust to my dangerous bridge."

It was with difficulty that John kept down the boiling indignation which he had no opportunity to vent on his smooth opponent, and which found safer expression in the tremendous oar strokes which sent him rapidly home.

“What was he to do next?” was the question that perplexed him, as he turned on his restless pillow. He knew well all the opposition he would provoke in giving his unfavorable opinion of the bridge; but he also felt so sure of his facts, that his active imagination, combined with his quick conscience, presented to him all the possible consequences of an accident to the bridge as due to him alone.

“I should be a murderer,” he said to himself, “if I went on building this bridge, which I know to be a trap which may lead hundreds to destruction. I must go to Mr. Maynard.”

Mr. Maynard received him cordially, as usual; but his brow grew dark as John explained to him the fault in the bridge.

“This is perfect nonsense, Eveleth,” he said; “here are you setting up your judgment against that of a skilful engineer. Why, he showed me a whole sheet full of figures, and proved to me that the chains would bear thirty times the weight that will ever come upon them. What do you say to that?”

“I haven’t seen the figures, sir; but I have seen the bridge, and I have studied into the matter, and I tell you this, that if I know any-

thing of the qualities of wood and iron, that bridge will not bear its own weight, much less the first day's passage of men and teams across it."

"I don't believe a word of it," replied Mr. Maynard. He had felt some misgivings on seeing the bridge, but the engineer had talked him over so smoothly that now he obstinately talked down his own doubts as well as John's.

"Mr. Maynard," replied John, "I must give up the work on the bridge. I should feel myself a murderer if I went on with it."

We know John had a bad habit of speaking out his whole thought, without considering its effect. Mr. Maynard was furious at this, and poured out more oaths and abuse than John had ever heard from him before.

"You may leave my house and my shop both as soon as you please," he ended; "you're bought over by somebody to run down the bridge, and I'll have nothing to do with such a traitor."

John was staggered by this charge, and biting his lips to keep back the hot, angry words, he bowed and left the house.

He went to the shop, and put his tools and other affairs in order to leave, and when Mr. Maynard came down he said, —

“I will leave at once, or go on with the shop-work till you get another hand.”

“Go! — this minute!” — roared Mr. Maynard; “I never want to set my eyes on you again.”

John left the shop without a word, and retired to his solitary home.

Perhaps there is no lonelier situation than that of an active man suddenly thrown out of work, and idle when all are busy. John felt ashamed to be seen on the streets in work hours, and he remained at home all day trying to busy himself in little jobs about the house, or to fasten his attention upon his books. Late in the afternoon, worn out with the ceaseless round of anxious thought, he fell asleep in his chair. He dreamed of a kind, sympathetic voice and touch which soothed his troubled heart; but suddenly struggling himself awake, he was sure that he heard a low knock at the door. As soon as he could collect his scattered senses he opened it; but no one was there, only on the threshold lay a bunch of purple pansies, fresh as if plucked within the hour. He looked hurriedly up and down the road, but the angel giver had disappeared. Yet he knew well where the heart's-ease grew. In the long evenings of spring he had helped Rose

plant her garden, and she had given an extra space to the dear little flower which she called his favorite. He knew well that her father's harsh command had separated them, or else, in the simple habits of the place, Rose would have staid to see him; but he knew, also, that she understood and trusted him. While still revelling in the happiness of this thought, another knock came. He opened the door to his good friend Ephraim Jenkins.

"Ah, John! I have come way out here to find thee. I told thee I would come to supper some day; but I went to the shop, and they told me thee had been away all day; so, fearing thee was ill, I came out here to inquire for thee. What ails thee, not to be at work to-day?"

"I shall work no more for Mr. Maynard; he has dismissed me."

"Ah! what has thee done?"

"I will tell you," said John; and he gave his friend an account of the bridge, and his interviews with Mr. Smythe and Mr. Maynard.

"Ah, John! thee's a brave lad to bear thy testimony; but thee did not go very cunningly to work, to make thy master so wroth. But there's

no help for that now. Will thee work for me, then? ”

“For you, sir? What can you want?”

“I’ll tell thee. Perhaps thee didn’t know I had a daughter that went off to England with her husband. Well, he’s dead and gone, and she’s coming back with her children to live with me; and I want a house to put them in. Will thee build me one on my lot here by the river-side? We will be neighbors, John.”

“Will you trust me with such a job, sir? This is the only house I’ve ever built.”

“And a very sunny, nice house it is,” said the old man; “I watched every timber thee laid. And now get thy pencil, lad, and we’ll draw out a plan; but not a word of it yet, till I buy the lumber; for if Mr. Maynard knew thee had a hand in it, perhaps he’d serve me an ill turn.”

A mine of gold could hardly have done John so much good as this offer. It was a beginning of the work he had always delighted in, and he put all his heart and mind, and all his simple skill, into making the house as comfortable, and good, and pretty as he possibly could.

He confined himself so closely to his work that

he seldom went into town. He dared not go to see Rose, and it was a bitter pain to him to pass by the door. When obliged to go among people, he was assailed with constant questions as to his rupture with Mr. Maynard, to which he answered that he did not like to work upon the bridge, because he thought it unsafe. Some of his young companions laughed at him as a coward; others shook their heads, and guessed there was more than that in the matter; but none took warning from his caution.

Every day John watched the progress of the bridge from his window. They were now laying the planks upon it, and the line of the bridge was just on a level with the sash of his window. One morning John saw, to his horror, that the line of the bridge was no longer coincident with that of the window, but a little below it. He watched it every morning, with his keen, trained eye, and was soon satisfied that there was no doubt the chains were settling from the weight of the timber.

He called the old Quaker's attention to it, and he gave notice to the directors of the bridge; but they could not or would not see the danger, but only added more planks in the middle of the

bridge, to restore the level, thus hastening the catastrophe.

John had the habit of rising early to study, and was one morning busy with his books, when he heard the cheerful voices of the workmen passing on their way to their daily work on the bridge. He rose up, and went down to his simple breakfast, but had scarcely finished it, when, on looking out of the window, where every morning he had marked the line of the bridge, in relation to that of the sash, he saw a startling change: the space between them had widened perceptibly in twenty-four hours; he even fancied he could see the bridge settle as he looked. Snatching his hat, he ran hastily down the hill, and saw, as he fancied, an unusual number of workmen on the bridge, the sound of whose busy hammers, as they kept time with each other, seemed to him like the knell of coming doom. At that moment he saw Mr. Maynard pass along the street, and just ready to set foot upon the bridge. It seemed to him that he could already see the huge structure sway and bend. He gave a fearful scream of agony. “Mr. Maynard!—help! help!”

Mr. Maynard was as warm-hearted as he was quick-tempered. He did not know the voice, but

he turned instinctively, and ran towards the cry of distress ; but before he reached John, a sound as of thunder rent the air, and John dashed past him ; he turned and saw the bridge a mass of ruins on the water, and heard the groans and screams of the wretched workmen entangled among the fallen timbers. John was already there, working like a madman, — lifting the heavy beams off the crushed victims, and risking his life at every moment to rescue those he had vainly tried to warn. It was an awful scene : the crowd soon gathered, and body after body was lifted from the water ; some with broken limbs, some crushed and mangled beyond recognition. Nine lives were lost on that fatal morning, and many more men were disabled for life. Mr. Maynard toiled all day to help.

“ My God ! ” he said to his brother, who begged him to rest ; “ let me work now or I shall go mad. One word of mine would have prevented all this.”

Often he and John together lifted some poor maimed body out of the wreck, and carried it tenderly to the litter provided by the townsmen ; but no word passed between them, and when at last night shut down upon the dreadful

scene, and all was done that could be, John went alone to his solitary home, and laying his head upon his arms on the table, tried to think over the terrible event of the day, and find some spot of hope or comfort.

He was roused by a touch on his shoulder, for he had not heard the door open.

“John Eveleth,” said his old master’s voice, “rise up and speak to me; tell me I’m not a wilful murderer; or I shall go mad here before you.”

“My dear friend,” said John, forcing him to sit down, “forgive me that harsh word; you acted according to your belief, I to mine. We won’t reproach each other; let us think rather what can be done for these poor sufferers.” Seizing rapidly the only means of calming Mr. Maynard’s mind, he proposed that a subscription should be raised for the sufferers and their families, and that Mr. Maynard should collect it, while he would attend personally to its distribution. Mr. Maynard bade him put his name down for a hundred pounds, and, more calm, started to go home. John feared to trust him alone, and walked home with him. As they reached the door, Mr. Maynard grasped his hand. Rose, after working

all day, to nurse the wounded, had watched anxiously for her father, and now opened the door to meet him.

“Rose,” said her father, “here is the man who has saved my life, and would have saved all this if I had only listened to him.”

“God bless you!” said Rose, as she held out her hand to him. He would not stay — his heart was too full — and he felt himself almost a monster, that a sense of happiness would mingle with the memory of the fearful misery of the day.

The wrath of the people burned hot against the faithless engineer; but he had disappeared from the place, and probably wandered over the earth the rest of his life, with the curse of Cain upon him.

NOTE. — The incident of the bridge is founded on fact. A young mechanic did perceive the fault in its construction, and warn the managers of it, but received the assurances of the engineer’s perfect knowledge in the matter very much as I have given them. I wish to say, however, that I do not know the name of the engineer, and have given a purely fictitious one; so that I hope none of the honorable family of

“Smiths,” who spell their name with a “y,” will feel aggrieved.


A second bridge, in a different place, was thrown down in a gale, but the present fine structure bids fair to stand all shocks, and we hope will be as permanent as it is beautiful.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WIFE.

“ So they loved, as love in twain
Had the essence but in one ;
Two distincts, division none ;
Number there in love was slain.”

SHAKESPEARE.

OHN had employed some of his spare hours since he left Mr. Maynard's employ in building a little light boat, in which he could row on the river. He had finished it and painted it, and on the stern, not without many a tender thought of one whom he had not seen or heard of for two or three years, he had put the name of Billy Paddle. He had tried her, and found that she was safe and manageable; and one beautiful September day, when the tide was high about the middle of the afternoon, he asked Rose if she would go through the falls with him, and, landing on one of the islands, spend the hour of rough water in gathering the early autumn leaves, and

return by sunset. It was very lovely on the river, in the warm yellow light of the autumn afternoon, and the island was as fragrant as Araby the Blest, with the odor of the fir and the broad cedar ; and when they re-embarked in their little boat, the glorious sunset light was reflected on the broad expanse of the river, which was then as smooth and calm as a sea of glass. John rested on his oars, and let the boat float at will over the sea of glory spread around them ; but he looked into Rose's face, which was lighted up with the tender beauty of the hour. At last he laid his hand upon the little hand which lay in her lap, brown with labor, and said, " Rose, I wish that I could go through life forever thus, with you by my side, and God's glory all about us."

And Rose looked up into his great, earnest, loving eyes, and said, " Why not, John? "

And then came that hour of bliss. Was it words, or thoughts, or heavenly harmonies they spoke? They knew not — only knew that all doubt and question had passed away, and they recognized each in the other as the true self.

But " time and tide wait for no man," — not even for lovers ; and suddenly John was roused from his dream of bliss by the rippling of the

tide, and, looking up, saw the river beginning to chafe and foam about the rocks.

“Merciful Heaven! what have I done?” he exclaimed; “the tide is falling!”

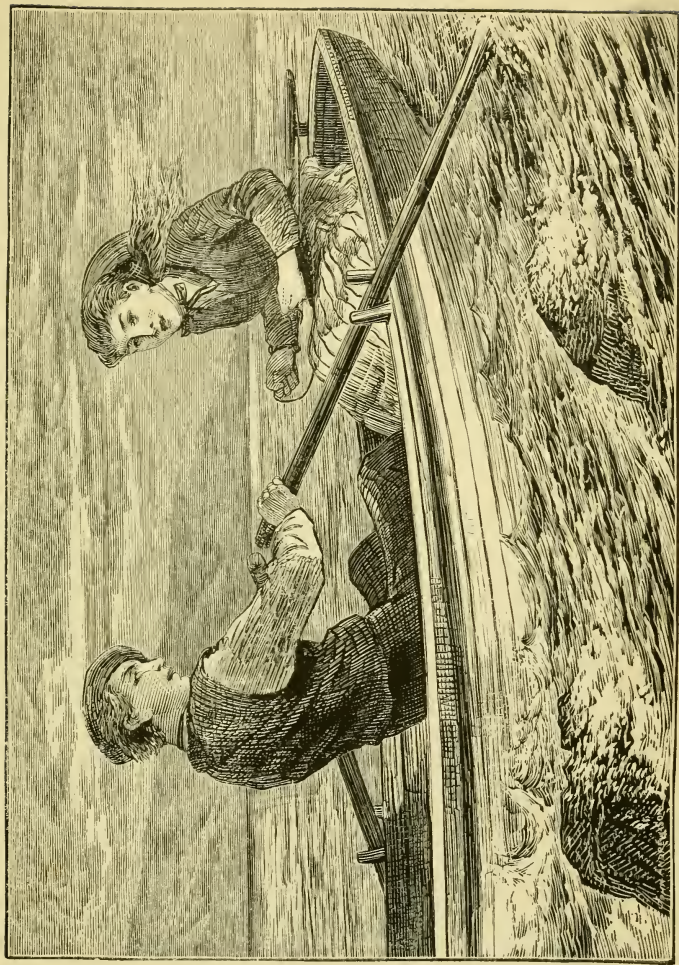
He seized the oars, and, without a word, Rose took the rudder, and he bent all his strength to the difficult task before him. Rose held the boat steady with firm hand, but more than once the keel touched on some hidden rock, and they were swept down by a rapid eddy.

“If we can but pass the white rock we are safe,” thought John; and as, at last, they swept by it, he heard the rumbling of the water through the other passage like the sound of thunder. They reached the shore at last, and John dropped the oars, and sat a moment, as if all the strength had gone out of his heart and limbs. Rose laid her hand upon his shoulder.

“Ah, John! we may have many a rough passage to go through together. Are you afraid?”

And he answered softly, “No, darling; not if I can have your hand at the helm, to guide me.”

It was impossible for Mr. Maynard to refuse his daughter to the man who had so lately saved his life; but it was hard for him to give her away



A ROUGH PASSAGE. Page 194.



from the home she had blessed so long, and he would not hear of a speedy marriage.

But John could not rest in his lonely home ; perhaps his constant hard work and study, and the excitement of the summer, had told upon his health. His business prospects were not very brilliant, for he had no capital to buy lumber and set up a carpenter's shop of his own ; and he fancied that it was this which prevented Mr. Maynard's consent to the marriage. His lonely home seemed insupportable to him, and he was more restless than even when he was not assured of Rose's love.

While in this state a letter came from Jim, describing his life in the West in the most glowing colors, telling him that he had just engaged in a business that was sure to be profitable, and begging him to come out and go into partnership with him.

The longing for wandering came over John's heart, and he felt as if this were a siren's voice, tempting him away. He took the letter up to Rose, and gave it to her in silence.

"Will you go, John?" she said.

"What can I do here? I have no shop, no work, no family. I shall never be anything here

but a mere journeyman carpenter: if it were not for leaving you, Rose, I would go at once; and sometimes I feel as if you would never be mine,—your father will never give you up.”

At this moment Mr. Maynard came in, and saw the anxious faces bent over the letter.

“What is the matter?” he said. “Is there bad news?” Rose handed him the letter, which he read. “Why, Eveleth,” he said, “you can’t be thinking of this; you mustn’t go out West.”

It seemed as if the two feelings within John came at once to a height, and flashed like an electric shock through him.

“I must do something, Mr. Maynard. I can’t live as I am. Give me Rose for my Christmas present, and I will stay; or else I will go out to Jim. I shall have somebody there, at least.”

Mr. Maynard sat down for a moment in deep thought; it was hard to give up the light of his home. Then he said,—

“It is the order of Nature. I have had my joy in life; go to him, Rose, and bless him as you have blessed me.”

And he went out and left them alone together.

On the Christmas eve was the wedding, and

John bore away his bride to the humble home which he had built with his own hands. The next morning he put into her hands a purse containing twenty pounds.

“Here, Rose,” he said, “is what I have left of my summer’s earnings. Twice I have lost all that I had; now I give everything into your hands; and all mine is thine forever.”

And from that hour John never made a contract, or expended any large sum, without his wife’s advice: no wonder that he became a prosperous man. Her calm, sweet temper moderated his impetuosity, and when he was angry or impatient, in his cooler moments she showed him wherein he had been wrong.

On Christmas day Mr. Maynard came to dinner with the young couple in their new home, and then offered John a partnership in his business, and the immediate charge of a new saw-mill which he was about to build on the river.

“You must have thought me an ungrateful brute,” he said, “not to ask you to come back, after the fall of the bridge,” — the old man’s face was almost convulsed with pain as he alluded to it, — “but I wished you and Rose to be free and independent; she has taken you in your

humble estate, and now I hope you won't repent of your engagement if your prospects are brighter."

The great drawback on John's happiness was his mother's miserable condition. But it was a great relief to talk over the matter fully with Rose; and she, with her quiet good sense, helped him to take the best view even of this unhappy case. She treated Mary with a daughter's respect and affection, and soon won her confidence. Mary had lost several of her children, and had now only the two eldest little girls, who were growing up as wild and lawless as Indians. They had their father's wit and liveliness, with their mother's pretty looks; and so bade fair to be unmanageable in the future, unless influenced for good now. Rose got them a place in the church school, and persuaded Mary to send them regularly, and, by inviting them often to their house, brought them under their brother's influence and her own, which was all for good. Friend Jenkins had taken possession of his new house, and the two families lived on the most friendly terms.

One day, very early in the spring, one of Mr.

Eveleth's men pointed out to him an object on one of the little islands in the river, which he was sure was a human figure. Remembering his own boyish adventure, John felt sure that some one had got left upon the island by the tide, and as the hour of calm water was at hand, he resolved to take his boat at once, and go to his rescue. Asking Rose to put up some bread and a bottle of milk for him, in case the man should be suffering from hunger, he rowed over to the island, and, leaving his boat on the sands, went in search of the man. He had begun to think he had been in error, when he saw broken branches, and signs of a fire; and following up these indications, he soon found a man lying upon the ground, either asleep or insensible. He raised him up, and looking earnestly in his face, saw the well-known features of his old companion, Billy Paddle, but so worn and emaciated that he could hardly believe it was his bright, active companion. By warming his hands, and giving him some milk to drink, he succeeded in reviving him. Billy did not at first recognize him; but when he did so, he fell upon his neck with a cry of love and pain that went to John's very heart. Fearing to lose the favorable tide, John hurried him

down to the boat, as soon as he could walk, and showed him the name painted on her stern. The poor fellow burst into tears at this proof of remembrance. If a child had been named for him he would not have esteemed it half so great an honor.

When Rose's kind nursing and John's encouraging words had restored him a little, in his strange, uncouth dialect he told his story. He had wandered back to his old friends, but somehow he was not content and happy as before. But he had remained with them, getting a precarious living by hunting and fishing, till a very severe exposure in a storm had made him very ill. He had never recovered from this illness, but seemed to be in a lingering consumption. He had had pains and a cough all winter, but such a longing came over him to see Johnny and Ailie, that he got into his old, crazy boat, to come down the river. Finding the falls too rough to pass, he landed on the little island to await the change of tide, and being very weary, he lay down and slept. The river rose to an unusual height, and reaching his boat, knocked her about on the rocks so that she leaked too badly for him to venture out in her. He had probably been on

the island a day and a night ; but he seemed to have lost consciousness of time in his exhausted and hopeless condition.

After he had been put to rest in a warm, snug bed, John said, —


“ Rose, this is Billy’s last sickness. What shall we do ? ”

“ Do, John ? What he did for you in your hour of need. Give him the best of all we have, and thank God for the opportunity.”

So, from that hour the poor outcast was sheltered and tended like a son ; and on pleasant afternoons he might be seen sitting in the sunshine, on the river banks, watching the changing tide, while Rose plied her needle, and John read to them. The poor boy did not understand a word of the book, but John’s voice was music to his ears. Or, alone with Rose, he would talk over his whole life, and, in his strange way, give her an insight into his thoughts and feelings ; and she found that he had been pining for love and kindness all his life, and now they could only smooth his way to the grave.

CHAPTER XII.

FLOOD TIDE.

“SN'T this a storm, Billy?” said John, one night in May, as he came home from his work, and wrung the dripping wet from his hair, and shook the water from his coat. “I have been way up to mother’s; for I heard she was sick, and she was worrying about her precious husband, who went out fishing, yesterday, and hasn’t come home.”

“Him’ll never come home,” said Billy; “him on Grand Menan.”

Billy had at times said things which seemed to show a strange power of insight or prophecy, but they had paid little heed to them, and now they hardly noticed his words; but he sat pondering by the fire.

A good home is never more delightful than when the storm roars wildly without; and John

felt thoroughly happy, as, after a thought of those exposed to the storm, and the satisfying reflection that he had done all he could for his mother, he put some fresh slabs on the fire, and took his usual place between Billy and Rose. If Billy could only rest his hand on John's shoulder, or look into his face, he was calm and content. John took his book in his hand, but did not feel disposed to read to-night; he kept listening to the storm, and the rushing river, now in the full spring freshet, and old memories of his boyhood came over him, and he told Rose and Billy many a little story of his childhood, and especially of his father.

"How near he seems to me to-night!" he said. "I almost feel as if he were with us, and rejoicing as I do, to have you about me, my dear wife, and my dear old friend."

"Him is here," said Billy, in his strange guttural voice, made more impressive by his wan face.

"True, Billy," said John; "those we love are always near. I sometimes wonder, if he had always been with me, whether he could have done me more good than the thought and memory of him have always done. To his last words I

owe it that neither health nor happiness has been wrecked by the fatal curse of drinking."

"And I've never tasted a drop, either," said poor Billy, "though they laughed and beat me."

"Poor Billy," said John, "why didn't you come to me?"

"You said you'd bury me, and I've come," said the poor fellow, half weeping.

Rose cheered him with kind words, and made him hold her yarn for her, and feel himself useful to her; and so the talk grew more cheerful till the bed time came.

It sometimes seems as if the sun never shone so brightly, or the earth looked so pleasant, as after a terrible storm; as if Nature knew that these wild forces were truly beneficent and conservative, although they seem so destructive. When John Eveleth went down to the wharves the next day, he heard many a tale of disaster to boats and shipping, which it was hard to accept under the bright sun of May.

On the third day after the storm, vague rumors of other losses were spread, and that afternoon a boat came in, with two men in her exhausted with hard labor, who reported that they had been

out fishing as far as the Grand Menan ; that they had been driven ashore on the beach, and that another boat had been upset very near them, and a man drowned, whom they believed to be Tim Larkin.

John made the most careful inquiries possible, and was satisfied that Tim had met his fate on the same shore where he had been wrecked so many years before. While he was pondering on the best means of breaking this news to his mother, the rescued sailor went on to say, —

“ I saw a strange sight down there too ; a great pine tree blew down in the gale, and right among the roots was the body of a man. I tell you I was scared when I saw it.”

John was at once all attention. “ Tell me all about it,” said he to the man.

“ Why, there isn't much to tell ; the clothes was most all rotted to pieces, but his boots was whole, and his bones was some on 'em white as snow.”

After a few more inquiries John felt convinced that his father's body had thus unexpectedly been brought to light, and he resolved to go immediately to examine it and bring the remains home, to be placed in consecrated ground. He engaged

a good boat and a man to go with him on the morrow, and then went home to tell his story. Rose at once consented to the expedition, which she knew John had so much at heart, and proposed that his mother and sisters should come up to stay with her during his absence, and so be gradually prepared for Tim's probable death. When John told Billy what had occurred, his eye brightened up, and he said, —

“Must go with you; do let me go, Johnny.”

“But you are not strong enough for such a journey.”

“I will be strong; only let me go. I want to go to sea once more.”

• They saw that his longing was so great to go, that they yielded to his wishes, and Rose carefully prepared cushions and blankets, and he was comfortably placed in the bow of the boat. He lay there, looking out over the water, and basking in the sunlight of the beautiful May-day, as if he were taking his last enjoyment of earth. They made a bed for him on the dry sand, back of the beach, out of reach of the tide, and set by him the nourishing porridge which Rose had put in for him, while they went on their search. And first they looked for any signs of the ship-

wrecked boat, and of Tim, who might be alive and suffering. They found the wrecks of his boat, which John easily recognized, as it had once belonged to his father. A little farther on was the straw-covered flask which Tim always carried with him, which John did not doubt he had held on to, as his dearest treasure, at the last. He could find no traces of his body, but these signs left little doubt of his death.

John then turned his steps in the direction of the fallen tree, and soon saw a noble pine, which the lightning had struck, shivering its strong trunk to ribbons. The earth was torn up by its fall, and exposed the body of a man. John could scarcely control his emotion, as he looked on it. The flesh had all gone ; the clothes shrivelled up like mould or ashes ; but the well-tanned boots preserved their form, and the silver sleeve-buttons, though black with the oxidation of the dampness, kept their shape. They raised the whitened bones, and laid them reverently in the new box which John had brought, and over them he laid fragrant branches of the cedar and the fir, and bore them away to the boat. On examining the boots carefully, he saw that they were odd, and remembered well his father's laugh as

he pointed out this circumstance, on the morning when he left home for the last time.

Although very weary with his journey, Billy seemed calmer and happier than before, though his strength daily diminished. Mary was much overcome by Tim's death at first, for he had really fascinated her by his showy qualities; but her facile nature soon accepted the change, and she could not but enjoy the quiet comfort of her life at John's, in contrast to the noisy misery of her own home.

The second day after his return, the few who claimed kindred with Stephen Eveleth, and some others, drawn by curiosity, gathered at his son's house to pay a last tribute of respect to him, and to help to lay his bones in the consecrated ground of the church.

When the service was ended, and the earth was laid over the recovered bones, John said,—

“My friends and neighbors, I thank you for your help and sympathy in this strange and solemn rite. It is now twelve years that the burden of this sorrow has lain upon my soul, and I feel freer and happier to-day to know the fate of my father certainly, and to have even these mouldering remains tenderly cared for.

But what I wanted to say was this. My father, as you know, left me a poor orphan, with no inheritance of money; but he left me what has been worth to me more than a fortune, — he required of me a solemn promise that I would never taste the intoxicating cup until he returned again. To-day, all that remains of him on earth is restored to his old home; and here, with deep gratitude to him for thus shielding me through the perils of my youth, I renew my pledge, never to taste of that cup till I meet his glorified soul in heaven.”

In the warm days of spring, Rose and Billy planted flowers about the new-made grave, and ere autumn came again the form of the poor outcast was tenderly laid in the earth, beside the father’s grave, but not until, in his true friends’ home, he had seen the smile of the new-born babe, and pressed a kiss upon the brow of the girl whom he christened Ailie.

And now I must hasten to close my simple story, for the tide is near the flood, and the waters are smooth, and I have no more adventures to relate.

John pursued his prosperous way. He made

frequent journeys to Boston and elsewhere, and sought every means of improving and enlarging his business, so that they were soon the largest and strongest firm in the town. John filled many offices of trust, and was chosen the first mayor, when the little town became a city.

He repaired his mother's house, and established her and her daughters in it, with a little shop, which, with occasional help from him, supported them comfortably. The girls, under Rose's influence, grew up bright and smart, and repaid John for his interest in them by their care of his mother. All the sweet traits of Mary's nature blossomed out in the quiet comfort of her old age, and she was a pleasant old woman, beloved by all who knew her. As soon as her brother found the house was well repaired, he came forward, and claimed it, as he had foreclosed the mortgage which Mary had given him upon it. John took the satisfaction of proving to him that his mortgage was entirely worthless, as the widow had only a life estate in her husband's house, and was not legal guardian of her children; and then paid him his ten pounds, saying, —

“My mother had a perfect moral right to control me, and the house should have been hers;

and I pay this money out of respect for her, and in return for the good knowledge of my trade which I got, in spite of your ill-will and cruelty.”

Jim and Ailie prospered at the West ; but after a few years Ailie began to feel the enervating influence of the climate, and to pine for the bracing air of the East. When Mr. Maynard died, and the whole business came into John's hands, he sent out for them to return and join him. They did so with great joy, and the brother and sister were united in prosperity, as they had been in poverty.

The old sailor was sought out and cared for in his old age ; the beloved graves were never neglected ; and the gathering family of little ones learned many a lesson of love and truth from their story.

A fair and stately mansion rose on the spot where the little board cottage had stood. It overlooked the river, and John never went to rest without a glance upon its rushing waters, now calm and still by the equal balance of forces, now raging in the contest of unequal strength.

Always a picture of life to him, he accepted it as a type of his own destiny, and was sure that the changing tides and the rushing falls, as well as the calm, pleasant bay, were all parts of the great ocean of eternal life, from which his life came, and to which he would calmly and joyfully return, enriched by all the experiences of mortal destiny.

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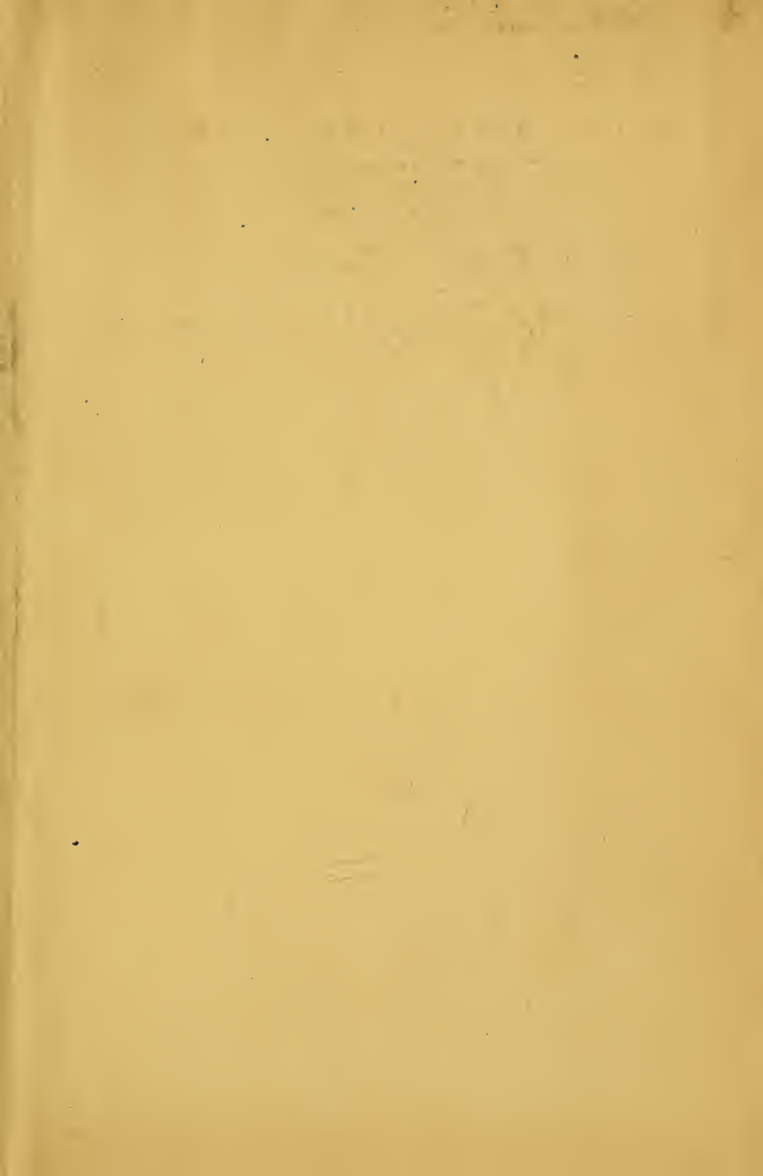
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